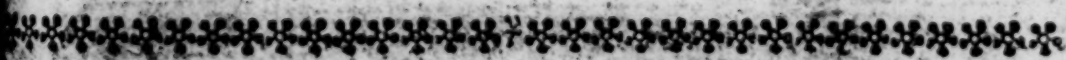


THE
DOCTRINE
OF THE
CHURCH of ENGLAND

FURTHER DEFENDED.





CHURCH OF BAYLY AND

TURTHAMPTON

By

For

Print

T H E
D O C T R I N E
O F T H E
CHURCH of ENGLAND
FURTHER DEFENDED,
A N D T H E
GLORIOUS STATE
O F T H E
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
DESCRIB'D;

By *PYNSON WILMOT*, A. B.
VICAR of *Halesowen* in the County of *Salop.*

*For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom
the LORD commendeth. II. Cor. x. 18.*

B I R M I N G H A M:
Printed for the AUTHOUR, by T. WARREN jun. near
the New Chappel. MDCC LIII.

THE
D. O. G. T. R. I. M. H.
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND



THE
GLORIOUS STATE
OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
DESCRIBED

BY PETER WILSON
VICAR OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY

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P R E F A C E.

IN the Preface to my former work I propos'd being more full in my defence of those Doctrines which I only touch'd upon in that. The six first Sermons in this shew that I have now put the finishing hand to what I before left imperfect. The two next contain not only an attempt towards rendering intelligible those Prophecies, of both the Old and New Testament, which have not yet been sufficiently explain'd, but directions suitable to the present Circumstances of the Christian Church. The ninth sets forth the wisdom of our pious forefathers in contriving means to avoid the ill effects of the Antichristian Doctrine both in Church and State. And the last is a Vindication of my Pastoral Conduct, with regard to my advising the Inhabitants of my Parish to form themselves into Societies; the Remarks contain'd in which being a full Proof that their Assembling together to use the Prayers at the end of it, to sing to GOD's glory, and to read some good Book, (he among them, who can read best, being the performer of their Religious service) is agreeable to the practise of our Church: And if so, much more may their Assembling with me be so accounted, either in places set apart for
Publick

Publick Worship, or in houses where these are not to be had, to hear our Church Catechism expounded, or the Holy Scriptures explain'd.

There are indeed two objections against my present proceedings; i. e. loss of time from labour, and the method I take being less useful than instructing from house to house, recommended by that excellent Prelate *Bishop Bull*. As to the first of these, it may be justly said that so little is the loss of time that it may well be term'd inconsiderable; no more being taken up from labour in the week time than three hours at most: For tho' I afford Instructions of this sort at five different places every week, yet the loss to each Person is no more than the time beforemention'd, in regard all the places I go to have a different Audience; which time may easily be recover'd by greater diligence, or less loytering at other times; and their Assembling when I am not present is after the end of their labour: And as to the second objection, I found by experience that the manner I proceed in is preferable in this place to instructing from house to house; though in small Parishes, or where the number of Ministers is equal to the work, that is of all other the most useful: For, though my Parish is very extensive, and consists of near a thousand Families, I can hereby instruct them all once every week, exclusive of the LORD's day service; which in going from house to house (as the houses are so distant from each other, and my other necessary Parochial duty so much) I believe

I could not have leisure to do more than once an Year: And as many of my Parishioners can't read, and more understand not what they read, my reading over a Chapter, and then explaining it cannot but be greatly useful; and more especially as, after such explanation, by making remarks from it I have an opportunity of speaking upon all Subjects; which I fail not to enlarge upon as I see occasion. So that, when these things are duly consider'd, and that I have no end to answer but the Spiritual good of those whom I grudge neither my time nor trouble in instructing, I hope none will see any cause for my discontinuing what I have long been engag'd in. But if, notwithstanding this Apology for what I have hitherto done, and continue doing, any think or say that I do evil in thus endeavouring to make my People *wise unto Salvation*, let them *bear witness of the evil*, and take their advantage, if they think fit.





T H E
D O C T R I N E
O F T H E
CHURCH OF ENGLAND,
FURTHER DEFENDED.
S E R M O N I.

M A T T H E W V. 7.

*Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be
Comforted.*



THESE Words seem intended, not only as an encouragement to the unregenerate to enter upon the necessary work of Regeneration, but to all those also, who have already enter'd upon it, not to grow *weary, nor faint in their minds, before their Iniquity is forgiven and their Sin is covered*: For though the vain of the World resist GOD's frequent calls intended to convert them, and refuse to believe that the Convictions, which *Work in others a Repentance not to be repented of*, are design'd for that valuable purpose, because they cannot think of leaving the pleasures
of

2 *A further* DEFENCE *of the* (Serm. I.)
of Sin and their Companions in iniquity, and tho' these know nothing of the nature of this difficult work, nor consequently of the great need those that engage in it, have of greater strength than their own to carry them through it, yet far are the Children of GOD from being unacquainted with either, and therefore are these not only thankful for, but place a proper dependance upon the gracious promise afforded in them; neither are such as these at any loss in accounting for what the unenlighten'd part of Mankind are found putting strange constructions upon. The spiritually wise know that this is *a strait Gate and a narrow Road* to all, (unless where infinite Wisdom is pleas'd to make an exception to this general Rule) as well as that it is straiter and narrower to some than to others. These know that some are so lamentably afflicted herein as to have the Powers and Faculties of both Soul and Body greatly weaken'd, almost a total stop being for a while put to their usual operations; that these disorders are sometimes so obstinate as to bid defiance to the skill of the ablest Physicians, that valuable part of Mankind; and that those, exercis'd therewith, are not only accounted void of Reason by those who understand not the nature of these complaints, but treated as such, to the great dishonour, as well as additional Affliction of these poor sufferers; most of which by a patient waiting with, proper attendance upon, and the seasonable assistance of the Physician of the Soul, join'd with the same of that of the Body, might be restor'd to spiritual and bodily Health. But here be it remember'd that by patient waiting with such as these I mean a compliance with every thing they desire as far as possible, void of all froward or contradictory Behaviour; these having already full as heavy a load upon them as they can well stand under, and therefore any unnecessary Addition must

(Serm. I.) CHURCH of ENGLAND. 3.

must be unnatural cruelty : The spiritually wise I say know what sort of comfort is suitable to those under this kind of Affliction, call'd by Bishop Hopkins, in his Sermon upon Regeneration, the Pangs of the new Birth, and therefore glad are they not only to find our LORD speaking so comfortably to, but that they may assure them that he intended the Consolation, afforded in the Text, for such as these. But, as the Number of these is small, when compared with the far greater of those who know little of these things, my design in this discourse is to encrease that small Number ; and this by shewing that, though there may be some difficulty attending this Heavenly Work, yet that ought not to discourage either the entrance upon, or continuance in it as long as such pious perseverance shall be necessary : And, as I think this end will be most effectually answered by assigning reasons for GOD's permitting these to be exercis'd with such Trials and Difficulties, as well as by satisfying these with answers tending to set aside those doubts and fears, which are often greatly perplexing to them, I shall proceed in my further discourse upon these comfortable Words of our gracious LORD in that Manner.

That the work of Regeneration is attended with considerable difficulty is plain from the experience and testimony of such as may be depended on : Neither indeed do the sacred Scriptures any where say that this may be effected by little or no trouble. On the contrary the very Title those give to it shews that this must not be expected ; it being therein call'd dying to Sin ; Death, if Holy Job be right in stiling it *the King of Terrours*, be it of what sort it will, implying difficulty : And as this Death is conflicting with the Powers of Darkness, it may reasonably be concluded that the enemy of Souls will not tamely part with the Authority

4. *A further DEFENCE of the* (Serm. I.)
thority he has long exercis'd over such as are concern'd therein. This the sacred Writings not only allow but inform all such what they must expect in this Case; nay set forth the strength of their adversaries by saying; *we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood only but against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of Darkness, and against spiritual Wickedness in high Places*; tho' for their Comfort they say also that *the Armour of GOD*; is sufficient to protect them against all assaults; and that *with their Temptations GOD will make a way to Escape*. But though considerable trouble and difficulty are usually found herein, yet what is that of a few Days, or Months, or even Years, to the eternal duration of infinitely greater hereby avoided? Nay, allowing that this Work is not effected by those who have not omitted engaging in it so long as others, or who are not chargeable with such offences as the World accounts of an heinous nature, either in a short time, or with little difficulty, yet just and right is it that it should be so for the following Reasons.

First, so great is the Blessing hereby obtain'd that it always brings along with it sufficient to recompence its long absence, or ever so great sufferings before the arrival of it. But when those less culpable than the generality of Sinners, who may think much of the withholding of this inestimable Mercy, call to mind that they deserve nothing but eternal Condemnation (as indeed the best of us all do), and that it is owing to the merey of GOD alone that it was ever vouchsafed, (who sure may be permitted to do what he will with his own) there will remain no cause for complaint: Nay it may also justly be observ'd in this Case that short-sighted Man is too often found hoping and wishing, nay praying for that which is against his own Interest to desire. For by not speedily granting

Mercy unerring Wisdom may have great and valuable ends to answer in favour of these, which a speedier indulgence would be inconsistent with. Thus for instance, a long enduring of affliction serves excellently to shew the heinous nature of Sin; what GOD can do; and how dangerous relapses into it may be; these being aggravations of guilt which, from what such already know of the divine Ability, they may well be afraid of adding to their former. Perhaps those, thus visited, may be design'd as Instruments in the Conversion of Numbers; to qualify them for which excellent work greater degrees of divine Aid than are commonly afforded are necessary, to carry them through what they are to be Agents in; and therefore they are thus prepared beforehand: For extraordinary spiritual Power vain Man may grow proud and assuming upon receiving; even to the despising and undervaluing those less indulg'd. So that it becomes necessary to have these taught the lesson of humility, by considerably greater difficulty before their desires are gratified. But, when we add to this consideration, the thought of having these hereby the better qualified to be assisting to others in the like Circumstances, (that being always best understood the knowledge of which arises from our own experience,) this will appear an unanswerable reason for such proceedings in divine Providence.

Again, this is highly reasonable, even in the severest degree it was ever felt by any man, considered as a punishment for sin; *i. e.* Sin in general, not for any particular sin; there having never appear'd in the world so much as one, (CHRIST only excepted) who did not by many, if not grievous sins offend GOD, and thereby deserve far heavier punishment than was ever inflicted upon any in this world; and which those, that account themselves just and upright, or not so great offenders

ders as others, would do well to consider: For when these remember that their own crying sins, (which they often put too favourable a construction upon,) were the Judas that betray'd theiraviour, the Insulting enemies that mocked, derided, crowned with thorns, and scourged him, and the cruel executioners, that assisted in driving the Crucifying Nails thro' his sacred hands and feet, in that He died as much to atone for the sins of these in particular as for those, who were principally concerned in the treachery, abuse, and Cruelty beforemention'd: I say when those, that are grievously afflicted in this world, consider these things, they'll soon find so little cause for complaint concerning the greatness, or long continuance of their present sufferings, that they'll rather thank, and bless the LORD that they are not greater; and more especially that they are not now suffering the Vengeance of eternal fire; now within the power of those inexorable Tyrants, the Devil and his Angels, as they might have been for all they could have done to have prevented it, and as they justly deserv'd: Nay this will appear still more reasonable, when it is remember'd that it is no part of the divine Obligation, or covenant with Mankind, to let Sin go unpunished, though its worst and most dreadful effects are set aside by a bleeding Saviour.

Another reason, and which is by no means an inconsiderable one, is the dependance upon GOD, hereby occasion'd: For, when Men have us'd their utmost endeavours, as far as humane means extend, to extricate themselves out of the difficulties, which contribute so largely to their uneasiness as to render Life a Burden to them, and find it impossible, and that at last effected, to their inexpressible Joy and Comfort, by the relieving hand of a merciful Redeemer, it cannot sure but ever after fix them firm in the duty of Resignation to the divine Will;
 incline

incline them also to reject the very thought of that deceitful and unsafe confidence, which is too generally plac'd in Riches and the power of Man.

Another Reason for the same thing is the love of GOD towards such, manifestly appearing in the end, tho' perhaps not immediately; *i. e.* in hereby preventing their being drawn into those Sins, which Satan and his Agents are busily engag'd in leading them into, tho' they perceive it not: For the subtilty, and artful contrivances of these enemies of all Righteousness, many times require the Divine Interposition; no other being sufficient to rescue the LORD's Servants out of the Danger, which they might not otherwise escape. And as omnipotence generally lifts up his rescuing, or preserving Hand, in the use of natural means, so hereby do secrets sometimes become as plainly reveal'd to those, thus visited, as if declar'd in word: Nay so wonderfully are the LORD's Servants hereby preserved, as not only to know how to secure themselves against present attempts of Satan and his Agents, but gain such knowledge as may effectually disappoint all future likewise. But, allowing that no advantage in a temporal respect may be hop'd for from hence, visitations of this kind often prevent far greater trouble in a spiritual, even everlasting Misery, the unavoidable Fate of the careless and impenitent; this being the greatest end intended to be answer'd by them. For we find GOD himself assigning this, as a Reason for dispatching these useful Messengers upon this gracious Errand, in these Words, mention'd in the 5th Chapter of the prophecy of the Prophet Hosea; *In their Affliction they will seek me early.* A Confirmation of this are those passages of sacred Scripture, inserted in the Office of Visitation of the Sick, in our Book of Common Prayer; these plainly proving that GOD doth not willingly grieve the Children of Men; and

and that, when he does correct them, 'tis only for their spiritual good, as the correction of Parents among us is intended for the Benefit of offending Children. So manifest is it that Visitations of this sort are a certain mark of Divine Love to all such. 'Tis true, the generality of Christians view not this Mercy in this Light. On the contrary they are observed to put a wrong construction upon it; these concluding it to be no other than a bodily Distemper; calling it lowness of spirit; and excluding all other causes in such cases then that humane Bodies are liable to Distempers and Infirmities. For want therefore of imputing these calls to the unconverted to the true Cause, and as the Religion they profess directs them, they fly to the Physitian of the Body only; not considering that a spiritual one ought as much at least, if not more to be consulted in this Case. For sure to disorders of a spiritual nature spiritual means cannot but be most suitable; in regard the cause being taken away, by contributing to the relief of the Soul, the effect, consisting in bodily disorders, will soon cease: Nay these means alone, made use of in time, would in all probability prevent the terrible effects too often consequential upon the omission of them; I mean despair, and self Murder, however let not those, who have long remain'd obstinately set against themselves, and have found all humane means unsuccessful, be unwilling to take the following directions; which can be no way hurtful if they prove less serviceable than I expect they will.

Instead of calling for their Servants and conveniences for exercise of any kind, let those, thus visited, retire to their Closets; and there resolve to enter upon, and continue in the use of the means of Grace, particularly describ'd in my Exposition of, our Church Catechism; it being a vain Imagination

nation that relief can arise from sinful amusements and recreations, Worldly Pleasures or Diversions, or from the offensive Mirth and Jocularity found in the Company of the vain and inconsiderate. Company of such a sort as affords suitable refreshment to the Soul would, I confess, be greatly useful in this Case; *i. e.* Such as prayer for divine help, attended with such kind of discourse as the Soul can take pleasure in; particularly in accounts how others were affected under the like Visitations, what Intervals of relief were afforded them therein, how they behaved under these Fatherly corrections, and how great was their Joy and pleasure at being permitted to *lift up the Hands that hung down, and the feeble Knees*, when their gracious LORD spake Peace to their delighted Souls: Company I say of this sort to those in these afflictions would be Physick highly useful; and the other apply'd the better. But such Company as entertains them with News, or trifles, or things of a worldly nature is poison to them: For, if such as these are drawn off by their means from answering the call of GOD to their Souls, they are as certain destroyers of such Souls as poison, taken into the Body, is a certain means of destroying, or causing it to perish. Nay so far is Company of this sort from being agreeable, or at all contributing to the relief of such as view these Divine Admonitions in their proper light, that 'tis troublesome and difficult to endure, 'tis nauseous and distasteful; the very sound of their Words being often odious and detestable. So that, instead of expecting assistance from the World, or any thing therein, the contrary must effect the cure of all these, as well as administer relief from time to time till it be effected. And therefore the company of such alone, who advise them to continue seeking help from above, is the only proper Society for such as these, and the only proper Employment,

ment, when out of such Society, *i. e.* When their Temporal concerns will permit them, is the continuance of their endeavours to obtain the assistance of GOD's Holy Spirit; this alone being capable of conducting them safely through the several combats of their spiritual Warfare: For this has done more for many in lamentable Circumstances than all other means which could be used; this having effected that deliverance, even in a compleat manner, which all other have fail'd in: Nay this method will appear still more likely to be effectual in this respect, when it is considered, that such as these owe a great part of their Afflictions to affrighting and troublesome, to blasphemous and despairing thoughts, continually thrust into their Minds by the enemy of their Salvation; and for which the following reasons may be assign'd.

First, the hatred and envy of this Enemy towards these objects of his aversion, join'd with his revenge, not only towards GOD for punishing him as he deserv'd, whom he knows these are deaf to, but also towards these themselves for deserting his service, puts this evil spirit upon exerting his whole Art and power against all these, thus endeavouring to be *reconciled to GOD*. As he subtilly foresees that, unless he can prevent the good effect of this necessary work, these will soon be remov'd out of his reach, he becomes indefatigably Industrious against them while he may. And as their thus being in a way to become happier than himself is so afflicting, and troublesome a reflection to him, he labours day and night to molest and disturb them; and this in hopes of inducing them to despair of that mercy, which they are in search of, before the LORD of Power commands him to get behind these his Servants, and to be no more vexatious to them.

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Another reason is the success his endeavours of this sort have been attended with; I mean in those, who have already suffered thereby in too many Ages of the World: For tho' the Divine Aid promised, and never deny'd to those that apply properly, and in time, for it, he knows is sufficient to protect all, so fortified, against his assaults, yet, if these can be prevail'd on either to omit asking in such a manner for it, or to discontinue their Petitions, or to lose this powerful Protection thro' an improper use of it, (the possibility of which he is very sensible of,) the case will be the same with them as if they had never endeavour'd to get out of their natural state at all; these in either of these Cases being as much exposed, without proper armour, to his attacks as if their spiritual shield, too often *vilely thrown away by offering despite to the spirit of Grace*, were not attainable.

But, were there no prospect of succeeding in these malicious attempts, the malignity of the nature of these evil spirits, join'd with the pleasure they take in being troublesome, and vexatious to the objects of their envy, would incline them to act as they are known to proceed against Mankind: For tho' the chief of these knew, that attempts of this kind against our blessed LORD would be vain and ineffectual, yet nevertheless did he persist in continuing them as long as he was permitted to do so. If then the saviour of the World was not left unmolested by this envious spirit, how can it be expected that those, who are call'd after his Name, should? and if GOD permitted his own Son to be thus attack'd, who are we that we should expect to be free from his malicious insinuations? 'Tis full as much as we have any cause to hope for, or desire, to be protected against this spiritual enemy's assaults. And that we are sure to be if we deprive not ourselves of the defence of a more powerful

erful spirit. Instead therefore of being discourag'd, let all such say thus to themselves; what a mercy is it, and how highly ought we to Value it, that we are enabl'd, not only to discern when we are set upon by this artful adversary, but to repel the *fiery darts* he is so often casting against us? Or what else have we to do but to rely at all times on the Almighty Arm of that gracious GOD, who *will never leave nor forsake us*, unless we first forsake him? And, when these are inwardly mov'd to think (as such often are) that GOD will not be reconcil'd to them, because their sins are very many, and very grievous, committed also against the clearest light, as well against repeated Vows and Resolutions to the contrary, let them read over these Words of the prophet Ezechiel, mentioned in the xviii Chapter of his Prophecy; *But if the wicked will turn from his sins that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die: all his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mention'd unto him:* And these also mention'd in the 1st Chapter of the Prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah; *Come now let us reason together saith the LORD, though your sins be as Scarlet they shall be white as Snow, though they be red like Crimson they shall be as Wool.* But if these passages of sacred Scripture should not be satisfactory, let such as these View the Account given of the two following remarkable examples of the divine compassion, or proofs of the fulfilling of the gracious promise, contain'd in the words beforemention'd; I mean David and Manasseh. The first of these shews that David, notwithstanding those grievous Sins of Murder and Adultery, committed against the clearest light, and the dictates of GOD's Holy spirit who had long made that Prophet's Body his Temple, was received again into GOD's favour, and entitl'd, thro' the forgiving goodness

goodness which restor'd him to it, to the mansions of the Blessed above as if he had never offended: And the last shews that Manasseh was no less mercifully accepted than Holy David. But, as his offences were of a more heinous nature than David's, I shall be somewhat more particular in my Remarks concerning him.

The extraordinary wickedness of Manasseh we find describ'd in these words, mention'd in the 33d Chapter of the second Book of Chronicles; *Manasseh did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the Heathen whom the LORD cast out, before the Children of Israel. For he built again the high Places, which Hezekiah his Father had broken down, and he rear'd up Altars for Baalim, and made Groves, and worshipp'd all the Host of Heaven, and serv'd them. Also he built Altars in the House of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my Name be for ever. And he built Altars for all the Host of Heaven, in the two Courts of the House of the LORD. And he caused his Children to pass thro' the Fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom. Also he observed times, and used Incantments, and used Witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with Wizards: He wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke him to Anger. And he set up a carved Image (the Idol which he had made) in the House of GOD of which GOD had said to David, and to Solomon his Son, in this House, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the Tribes of Israel, will I put my Name for ever. To this he added also the Sin of Murder, not only frequently committed, but upon the Persons of the Innocent; as appears from these Words in the 21st Chapter of the 2d. Book of Kings, Moreover Manasseh shed Innocent Blood*

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very much till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another ; besides his Sin wherewith he made Judah to Sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD : Notwithstanding all which we find GOD, upon his Repentance, blotted out all his transgressions, and admitted him again into his Favour ; as appears from these Words, mention'd in the 33d Chapter of the 2d. Book of Chronicles ; And when he was in Affliction, he besought the LORD his GOD, and humbled himself greatly before the GOD of his Fathers, and pray'd unto him, and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his Kingdom.

But here perhaps it will be objected, that these are promises and examples belonging to the Old Testament ; no such comfort to the Penitent being to be found in the New, which Christians are to be directed by. In answer to this it may be observ'd, that the Sins of Manasseh were pardon'd the same Way as those of Christians are : For I have prov'd in my exposition of the Church Catechism, that the Jewish Church was under the second Covenant as well as the Christian ; the Blood of CHRIST being what cleansed the members of that Church from all Sin as well as it does those of the Christian ; and therefore all the promises of Pardon, upon repentance, made in the old Testament, are as applicable to the Christian as they were to the Jewish Church. But, if an Addition of this kind be thought necessary, let the encouragement afforded in the Parable of the Prodigal Son be considered in this case ; this being design'd to set forth that, not only numerous, but grievous Sins will be forgiven. And that it should be so will appear to be no wonder at all, when we consider that the mercy of GOD is infinite ; and that the Blood of CHRIST, which atones for Sin, is of infinite Value ; and

also

also what our LORD says concerning this matter in these words, mention'd in the 12th Chapter of St. Mathew's Gospel; *All manner of Sin and Blaspemy shall be forgiven unto Men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men.* Here ye find CHRIST himself promising to forgive all manner of Sin to all, that come to GOD by Faith and Repentance as he hath directed, the Sin against the Holy Ghost only excepted. But then perhaps a grievous sinner may say; my sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost; and which the Tempter will be ready enough to confirm him in the supposition of. But that this cannot be the case with the unregenerate is plain; in regard the sin against the Holy Ghost is denying CHRIST, or renouncing the Christian Religion, and thereby accounting CHRIST an Impostor and Deceiver, after the Holy Ghost has inform'd those, that do so, to the contrary in the effects of Regeneration. Consequently those, who know not experimentally what Regeneration is, and have never enjoy'd the blessed influences of that Holy Spirit, cannot have committed this sin: Neither can the Regenerate commit it, unless they knowingly and wilfully renounce the Christian Faith, and declare that CHRIST was not the promised Messiah, but a Deceiver. What encouragement then have grievous sinners to come to GOD, in the use of the means of Grace, from the passages already cited out of both old and new Testament? And more especially, when the invitation all such have given them to enter upon, and continue this necessary Work, is duly consider'd? And what that is the following Passages, found in the Writings of the Evangelists, sufficiently discover. Says our LORD in the 11th Chapter of St. Mathew's Gospel; *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you:* Again in the 6th Chapter

Chapter of St John's Gospel; *Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out*: And says the same Gracious Redeemer, concerning the continued use of the means of Grace, in the 11th Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel; *How much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* i. e. GOD will be ready to hear, and grant the Petitions of those that come to him as their Saviour directs them; nay much more so than men are to indulge their children or friends in what they request of them. But the Parable of the importunate Widow, mention'd in the 18th Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, affords the clearest proof of the advantage obtainable by the continu'd use of the means of Grace: For says our LORD in that Chapter in the application of this Parable; *shall not GOD avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him, tho' he bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.* A plain proof this that there can be no danger of not receiving, to those that continue asking as their merciful Redeemer adviseth them.

But, lest after all these comfortable assurances of Divine mercy to those that are endeavouring to obtain it, the spiritually afflicted should distrust the possibility of their acceptance with GOD, because they may not be of the number of His Elect, be it ever remember'd, that the supposition of GOD's choosing some in particular, and rejecting others, notwithstanding their endeavours to be accepted, has no foundation in Holy Scripture. It must therefore be false doctrine; and, as such, is not at all to be regarded. Or, should these scruple the goodness of their condition, on account of their unwillingness to engage in those Religious duties which they ought not to omit, of the coldness and indifference they often discharge them with, or of the blasphemous and despairing thoughts their minds are many times taken

taken up with, and which they are sometimes compell'd to utter in word, these considerations need not disturb them; because, if they endeavour'd to have thought and acted otherwise, and would not have offended in either of these respects if they could have avoided so doing, these must be involuntary offences; i. e. such as are pardon'd upon proper application to GOD for that purpose: For, as GOD is Omniscient, he knows from whence all evil suggestions proceed, and as he knows also that such did not willingly offend, he readily heareth the prayer of all such, and soon pardoneth these unwillingly committed offences: Nay These, as they are thrust into their minds and mouths by evil spirits, (which may be permitted thus to molest them to shew how dreadful a thing it is to be within their power,) rather recommend them to the mercy of GOD; who beholds every thing from on high, and whose compassions fail not.

As little cause also have all such to be disturb'd at another way of attacking them, which the same evil Spirits are equally concern'd in; I mean the scornful and abusive behaviour of the Agents of these evil Spirits while they are bearing the tryal of their Faith; it being usual with these, (because they thereby best answer the end of the promoter of this evil,) to account Visitations of this sort as Judgments from GOD for some grievous offence; and, where no such can be made appear, to surmise and invent things, to the dishonour of them, which they never thought of; nay sometimes also, where fear of temporal punishment withholds them from mentioning openly what they privately insinuate, to insult them upon their false accusations by signs and actions; these sparing no pains to blacken their reputation in the world, as well as to rob them of their private peace. But, as such proceedings are so contrary to the duty of Christians, who are commanded
to

to weep with them that weep, and to rejoice with them that rejoice, these alone are a full proof that such are of their Father the devil; whose works these are, tho' perform'd by his Agents or Instruments; and therefore are to be as little regarded as the suggestions of Satan himself. But, were not as much as this to be said in this case, daily experience shews the falseness of this Satanical suggestion; numbers among us being thus affected, who are far from being chargeable with what the World accounts grievous offences; which is a full answer to the uncharitable surmise before mention'd. However thus far I can agree with these; i. e. that G O D does sometimes Visit heinous offenders with severe temporal Judgments: And, as few offences are greater than those, which are committed against CHRIST in the persons of such as strive to encrease His Kingdom here, consisting in the abusive reflections, the Injurious Brutish behaviour of their Persecutors towards them, these of all others stand in greatest danger of signal Divine Vengeance in this World; it being in the power of an omnipotent G O D to arise, whenever he pleases, to maintain his own cause; and to shew these daring offenders that, tho' his avenging Arm is slow, it is nevertheless sure.

Let not then those, that sorrow after a Godly sort, be discourag'd, either by the attempts of Satan or his Agents; from proceeding as they have begun: For these have no meaner security given for their support and deliverance than that of a GOD of Truth, whose word never yet fail'd; neither is it possible that it ever should: For tho' *Heaven and Earth may pass away*, yet the words of this only living and true G O D never can; and his words ye know are these; *Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be Comforted.*



S E R M O N II.

On J U S T I F I C A T I O N.

R O M A N S V. 1.

*Therefore being justified by Faith we have Peace
with GOD through our LORD JESUS
CHRIST.*

TH E S E Words contain the comfortable doctrine of Justification. But as, I fear, few understand it as they ought, tho' their eternal Salvation depends upon this inestimable Mercy, which our gracious LORD was pleas'd to procure for us, I propose being the more particular upon it in this Discourse.

Justification, taken in its general sense, is a perfect and compleat obedience to the Will and Law of GOD; whereby those, that yield it, are accounted just and righteous before GOD, and therefore intitl'd to his favour thro' the merit of such Obedience. But as this is not the righteousness whereby we become acceptable to GOD, and entitl'd to his favour and blessing, (none of humane race having this to plead before GOD, CHRIST only excepted,) we must come to him some other way. And what way that is St. Paul plainly enough describes, by saying that *being justified by Faith we have Peace with GOD thro' our LORD JESUS CHRIST*; i. e. the way to become reconciled to GOD, so as to be at peace with him, to be accounted as just and righteous with Him, or to be acceptable in his sight, is by Faith in our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Now

Now, in order to understand what this is, we must look back to GOD's Covenant with our first Parents; to their behaviour under it; and to the nature of the second Covenant, which succeeded in the room of it. But, as I have describ'd this at large in my Catechetical Discourses, I need not now repeat what is already sufficiently explain'd. I shall therefore only observe here, that by Faith in CHRIST we are to understand, and believe, that the deplorable state Mankind was in thro' Original transgression, whereby they became liable to Death temporal and eternal, CHRIST, our Redeemer, deliver'd them out of; that this he did by assuming humane nature for that purpose, making therein a full Reperation, and Satisfaction for the breach of the divine Law, by bearing in his own person the punishment due to sin, as well as yielding that perfect, and compleat Obedience, which the Law of GOD required; that GOD accepted what he so did and suffer'd, as such; and that he will receive, or account as just or righteous, all, that desire to be admitted into his favour thro' his means; *i. e.* thro' his merits, and by the imputation of this Saviour's righteousness. All therefore, who would thus become reconciled to GOD, must come to him by the Faith I have now been describing; take care to depend upon the Merits and Righteousness of this Saviour only; and not presume to obtain this Favour by any Merit or Righteousness in themselves, or of any good works they may at any time suppose they do; this being the Doctrine of Justification by Faith. And that this is no more than every such a one ought to acknowledge, hear what may be said in confirmation of it. Says St. Paul in the 3d Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans; *Whom GOD hath set forth to be a Propitiation, thro' Faith in his Blood to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins*

Sins that are past thro' the forbearance of GOD; to declare I say his Righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS: So again in the 5th Chapter; being now justified by his Blood we shall be saved from wrath thro' Him; we also Joy in GOD thro' our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom we have now received the Attonement: And in the 4th Chapter thus; But to him that Worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly his Faith is counted for Righteousness: Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the Man unto whom GOD imputeth Righteousness without works: So again in the 3d. Chapter of the same Epistle we find him affirming, that by the Deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in His sight; i. e. Obedience in us to the Law of GOD is not what procures remission of sin, and acceptance with GOD; nothing, but the merits and righteousness of CHRIST, being capable of so great a Work. This consideration led the same Apostle to say, in the 3d. Chapter of the Epistle beforemention'd, thus; Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what Law? Of Works? Nay but by the Law of Faith: i. e. No Man has the least room to glory in the thought of procuring Justification before GOD, by any thing he can do towards meriting it; this arising to him meerly thro' Faith in his Saviour's merits. Whosoever therefore refuses accepting it upon these Terms can't have it at all: For adds the same sacred Writer, in the 3d. and 5th. Chapters of the same Epistle; All are justified freely by His Grace: The Grace of GOD, and the Gift of Grace, which is by one Man CHRIST JESUS, hath abounded unto many: But in the 2d. Chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians he clears up this matter as plainly as Words can do it: For says he therein; By Grace are ye saved thro' Faith, and

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that

22 *A further* DEFENCE *of the* (Serm. I.)
that not of yourselves; It is the Gift of GOD:
not of Works lest any Man should boast.

Thus it appears, from the very word of GOD itself, that Christians ought to believe, that the remission of their sins, and their acceptance with GOD, arises thro' the Blood of CHRIST, and thro' his Merits and righteousness only: and that it is highly reasonable that the deliverance, (wonderful and amazing as it really is,) should be imputed to CHRIST only, who wrought and purchas'd our Redemption, by paying so high a Price as his own Blood for it, will appear from the following considerations. What Hand had Mankind in this surprizing work? What sufferings did they endure to bring this about? or wherein did they at all contribute towards, at the time in which it was effected? none at all. As then we have the benefits, but underwent none of the difficulty requir'd to compleat our deliverance, why should we attempt to rob or defraud our Lord of the Glory of it? which, by concluding that we, either wholly, or in part, procure remission of our Sins by our own Righteousness, we manifestly do. For the sake of the better understanding this, let us suppose a Man, imprison'd for debt, setting forth in as moving a Manner as possible, the misery of his Condition, occasion'd by his confinement; using the most humble importunity to excite the compassion of his Creditor; and thereby prevailing upon him to release him. Is it agreeable to reason, in such a case, to affirm that the Debtor had any right to the requested deliverance, when he did nothing towards discharging the Debt? Or can it be said, that the humility, and importunity of the Debtor, was of any further use to him than rendring him a proper object of the Creditor's compassion; the Creditor being at full liberty to hearken to the entreaty, or to refuse granting the Petition? The case is exactly the same with offending Mankind. All
they

they can do, consisting in believing, and applying to GOD for help, as the sacred Scriptures advise, only renders them proper objects of the divine compassion; tho' this behaviour in them be requir'd as a condition, without which no notice will be taken of them: For the conferring the benefits of Redemption, consisting in the Remission of their sins, and their acceptance with GOD, is as much the effect of Grace, and the Free Gift of GOD, as the Releasement of the Prisoner was an Act of meer mercy in the forgiving Creditor; Sinners, by their Faith and repentance, (both which are the Gift of GOD,) no more discharging the Debt due to GOD, consisting in yielding Obedience to his Laws, than the forgiven Prisoner paid the Debt, which he was imprison'd for; and so all Christians, that may be said to understand the sacred Writings, have ever thought. But, lest any should be ignorant, or arrogant enough, to contradict this Doctrine, it may not be amiss to confirm it by the Authority of our Church, in her Articles and Homilies. The second Article of our Religion has these words in it; "The Son, which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and Eternal GOD, of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the GODHEAD and the Manhood, were join'd together in one Person, never to be divided whereof is one CHRIST, very GOD, and very Man; who truly suffered was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for Original Guilt, but also for all actual sins of Men. The same is also declar'd in the Homily of our LORD's Passion in these Words; "Therefore I say unto you that we must apprehend the Memory of CHRIST's Death and Passion by Faith; and

“ that with a strong and stedfast Faith, nothing
 “ doubting but that CHRIST by his own ob-
 “ lation, and once offering himself upon the Cross,
 “ hath taken away our sins, and hath restored us
 “ to GOD’s favour so fully and perfectly that no
 “ other sacrifice for sin shall be hereafter required,
 “ or needful in all the World. ” In the Homily ap-
 pointed to be read upon Good Friday are these
 words; “ So well pleas’d is the Father, Almighty
 “ GOD, with CHRIST his Son, that for his
 “ sake he favoureth us and will deny us nothing. So
 “ pleasant was the sacrifice and oblation of his
 “ Son’s Death, which he so obediently and inno-
 “ cently suffer’d, that he would take it for the
 “ only, and full amends, for the sins of the whole
 “ World. And such Favour did he purchase by
 “ his Death of his Heavenly Father for us, that
 “ for the merit thereof we be clearly discharged
 “ from our sin. No Tongue surely is able to ex-
 “ press the worthiness of so precious a Death: For
 “ in this standeth the continual Pardon of our
 “ daily offences: In this resteth our Justification:
 “ In this we be allowed: In this is purchased the
 “ everlasting Health of our Souls. Yea there is
 “ none other thing that can be named under Hea-
 “ ven to save our Souls, but this only work of
 “ CHRIST’s precious offering of his Body upon
 “ the Altar of the Cross: There can be no work of
 “ mortal Man (be he never so Holy) that shall be
 “ coupled in Merits with CHRIST’s most Holy
 “ Act. For no doubt all our thoughts and deeds
 “ were of no Value, if they were not allowed in
 “ the merits of CHRIST’s Death. ” The same
 is also affirmed in the Homily of Arms, that of
 Repentance, and several other. But the 11th Article
 of our Religion is a full proof that this is the Doctrine
 of our Church. I shall therefore cite it in this
 Place, for the sake of putting an end to all con-
 troversy

controverſy concerning it. The Words of it are theſe. " We are accounted righteous before GOD " only by the merit of our LORD and SAVIOUR " JESUS CHRIST by Faith, and not for our " own Works and deſervings. Wherefore that we " are Juſtified by Faith only, is a moſt whole- " ſome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort, as is " more largely expreſs'd in the Homily of Juſti- " fication.

Having thus fully prov'd that we are juſtified by Faith only, there remains nothing more, to render this Doctrine ſatisfactory, than to make what St. James ſays of works conſiſtent with it. In the 2d. Chapter of his General Epistle he ſays that *Faith without works is dead*; and mentions Abraham and Rahab as Inſtances of perſons juſtified by works. From hence ſome are obſerv'd to reaſon thus; If we are juſtified by Faith only, St. James muſt ſpeak improperly in affirming that Juſtification ariſes from works; and, in order to reconcile the ſeeming diſagreement between St. Paul and St. James, (one of which ſays we are *juſtified by Faith only*, and the other as poſitively that *we are juſtified by works*,) theſe ſay that Juſtification ariſes from both; i. e. by Faith and works together; or partly by one, and partly by the other. For the right underſtanding therefore of this ſeeming Contradiction the following remarks muſt be made; which will prove both theſe Apoſtles right, or conſiſtent with each other, as meaning only one and the ſame thing; i. e. that Juſtification is obtained by Faith only. But by the word Faith muſt not be underſtood ſuch a Faith as conſiſts in a bare acknowledgment that Chriſt has done and ſuffer'd as he did; which Faith may be found in wicked men and evil ſpirits. Not ſuch a Faith as moves not, nor inclines thoſe, that exerciſe it, to holineſs and the performance of Religious

Religious duties; or as leaves them Cold and indifferent, lifeless and inactive therein: I say Justification arises not from such a Faith as this; but from what is term'd a lively Faith; i. e. such a Faith as puts those, it is found in, upon exerting all the powers and faculties of their souls and bodies for the sake of that saviour, and in obedience to his command, who has done so much for them. To shew therefore such, as walk'd not in this Path, how much they were mistaken in their supposition, St. James said so much as we find he does in the Chapter beforemention'd; assuring them therein, that a bare belief in CHRIST would be so far from answering to them the end of salvation, that it could not be called Faith; nothing deserving that Title which did not appear in good works: In confirmation whereof he says, that the Faith of Abraham and Rahab was of such a sort as produc'd good works; that of Abraham appearing in his compliance with the Will of GOD, in not withholding his only son, when he was order'd to sacrifice him upon the Altar; and that of Rahab in assisting the Messengers of Joshua, the servant of GOD, whom she believed in. These Instances this Apostle favours us with, as well as his description of Faith in this Chapter, to shew us the difference between a dead and a living Faith; the one deserving its Title where men believe what the Holy scriptures say of CHRIST, and suffer it not to influence their lives and Conversations, nor to appear in good works; and the other where the force of it is so great upon their Minds as to keep them alive in Piety; i. e. continually employ'd in good and Religious Acts. And the more effectually to set forth the Insufficiency of a dead Faith, or Faith without works, he argues in the following admirable manner, Says he to those who contended for the sufficiency

ficiency of a bare belief in CHRIST tho' not in the same words; This Faith I allow to be valuable in its proper place, because 'tis a qualification without which the Addition, which GOD must make to it to render it lively, or Justifying, will never be vouchsafed. But, where Men rest themselves contented with this only, (which Abraham and Rahab did not,) and proceed not to take such further steps as tend to render it a living Faith, 'tis no better than that which he describes in these Words; *Thou believest that there is one GOD, Thou dost well: The Devils also believe and tremble: i. e.* If thou contentest thyself with what evil Spirits do, thou canst expect no more advantage from thence than they have: And, lest what he before observ'd should not be attended with its desir'd effects, he added these most significant expressions; *But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without works is dead! i. e.* If thou art willing to receive Instruction, observe what I now say to thee. I assure thee that the Faith, which produceth no good works, can be call'd no other than a dead Faith; and which, for the sake of rendring this Doctrine the more intelligible, he compares to a dead Body; which, for want of the Soul to move and actuate it, remains without motion. So that in this Apostle's opinion Faith may be accounted valuable, and then only stil'd lively, or Justifying, when it inclines those, that have it, to be continually given to good Works. Consequently those only may be said to have Faith, who are thereby moved to lead an holy and religious Life. This objection against the Faith, I here recommend, I have been the longer upon, because it is the only one that has any seeming support from the written Word; and which when thoroughly examin'd, is of no force at all; this Apostle being so far from destroying Justification

tion by Faith only, that he confirms the necessity thereof by explaining the nature of it; and by shewing when it may be said to deserve to be so call'd.

That our Church understands this Apostle in this manner I prove from the twelfth Article of our holy Religion in these words; "Albeit good works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of GOD's Judgment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to GOD in CHRIST and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith, inasmuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a Tree discern'd by the fruit. The Homily concerning Salvation is no less clear in this matter in these words; "For that Faith, which bringeth forth no good work, or evil works, is not a right Faith, but a dead, Devilish, Counterfeit, and feigned Faith: For the Devils believe CHRIST declaring himself very GOD, and all things written in the Old and New Testament to be true; and for all this Faith, they be but Devils, remaining still in their damnable state, lacking the true Christian Faith: The right and true Christian Faith is, not only to believe that the Holy Scripture, and all the foresaid articles of our Faith are true, but also to have a sure Trust, and confidence in GOD's merciful promises, to be saved from everlasting damnation by CHRIST, whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey GOD's Commandments." It therefore appears, not only from what St. James says, but from the Testimony of our own Church, in one of her articles and homilies, that the works, mention'd by this Apostle in his general Epistle are not works before Justification, but the fruits of Justifying Faith; and which are necessary as proofs that those who pretend to it, have really such a Faith; i. e. that they continue in

in their justified state. This many in St James's time not considering, and which many among us imitate their example in, concluded that believing in CHRIST only is the Faith which brings Salvation. Whereas this Apostle plainly assures all such, that this is not the Faith of Christians, but of Devils and wicked men; and therefore he pronounceth that man no Christian, and consequently not entitl'd to the benefits which come by CHRIST, who stops at barely believing that CHRIST came into the world to save sinners, and proceeds not with that Faith to use the means prescribed to have it render'd compleat. And that it should be so seems agreeable to reason: For tho' CHRIST has favour'd us with the way, and means of deliverance, from the dreadful effects of Sin, yet, till that way, or means, is made use of, it can be no more serviceable than if there were no such way, or means, afforded. This we may the better apprehend from the following remarks. Suppose a Man lay in danger of Death thro' grievous bodily Wounds, and was told that there was a Person, not far from him, capable of healing those wounds, if application were made to him for that purpose; but instead of doing so, if he made no application to him for assistance, nor applied to his wounds what such a one recommended, as suitable to them, can it be expected in such a Case, allowing that the Person, recommended to him, were ever so capable of assisting him, that any more benefit can arise to such a wounded Man, than if there were no such Assistant to be met with? As this may not be imagin'd, so no more benefit can arise from what CHRIST has done for Mankind, unless the same be applied to those, that expect the propos'd advantage; believing only that CHRIST can save them, or that what he has done is sufficient for their Salvation, being nothing at all to the purpose. This we find the learned

Dr. Hooker declaring in these words in his Discourse upon Justification; CHRIST hath merited to make us just: "But, as a medicine, which is
 "made for Health, doth not heal by being made,
 "but by being applied: So by the merits of CHRIST
 "there can be no Justification without application
 "of his merits." What therefore that application consists of, as well as how to know when Faith gains the Title of Justifying, 'tis my business now to lay before you.

The way or means then, whereby the merits of CHRIST are applied, so I mean as to have that addition made to believing in CHRIST, which consists in an assurance of his being a SAVIOUR to any in particular, is a continu'd use of the means of Grace, describ'd at large in my former work: For to a proper use of those smaller degrees of Grace, whereby we are enabl'd to come to GOD in the use of those means, is a promise annex'd (in these Words, *Ask and ye shall have,*) of those greater degrees thereof, the effect of Regeneration. The use therefore of these is to be continued till those, so using them, find that their sins are forgiven, and that they are *accepted in the Beloved*; the inward Witness, which assures them that it is so, being the Addition which renders faith lively, or Justifying: And that the Holy spirit does as much as this is plain, from the Alteration his Presence Occasions in all such: For thereby are they inwardly moved to abhor every thing, which they suppose displeasing to GOD; to delight in serving, and obeying him; and to take pleasure in being as serviceable as possible to their fellow Christians; and that both spiritually and temporally. Thereby are they favour'd with such inward Comfort as consists in a calmness, and serenity of Mind, peculiar to this Blessing. And thereby is vouchsafed to them such Peace, as well as such joyful confidence in the giver of
 this

this earnest of their future Inheritance, this seal, or confirmation of the gracious promises, made to believers in his holy Word, that they are ready to join with the sacred Writers, in declaring that *the Peace of GOD passeth all understanding*; to acknowledge also that the secret pleasure, arising from the assurance they thus have of being in favour with GOD, is properly stil'd *Joy in the holy Ghost*. And that it should be so will appear from considering that the enlightening of their understandings, so I mean as to perceive that they are in a justified state, was intended to afford such comfort as this to those, that are in want of, or are piously seeking for it. This is the inestimable mercy, which many living witnesses are ready to declare they have experienc'd; and which many say so great things of in their Writings, before *they departed hence and were no more seen*; and particularly that remarkably learned, and pious Father of our Church, Bishop Bull; some of whose Words concerning this matter, in his Sermon upon the Testimony of the Spirit, are these, "The spirit of GOD, " says this great good Man, can with the greatest " ease cause the light of divine consolation to arise, " and shine upon the dark and disconsolate Soul. " And this he often does. I may here appeal to " the experience of many good Christians, who " sometimes find a sudden Joy coming into their " minds enlightening their understandings, expelling " all Clouds from thence, warming and enlivening " their affections, and enabling them to discern the " Grace of GOD shining in their brightness, and " to feel them vigorously acting upon their Souls, " so that they have been after a sort transfigured " with their SAVIOUR, and wish'd with St. Peter " they might always dwell upon that mount Tabor. " This indeed this Bishop observes to be a favour granted only upon particular Occasions; and

and more especially as a Comfort and Encouragement to those in great distress. But what distress can be greater than that of those, who have long labour'd under the painful work of Regeneration? Perhaps it will also be observ'd in this case, that this Bishop's remarks concerning the inward Witness mean not an assurance, to those that are favour'd with it, of the Pardon of their sins, and of their acceptance with GOD, because he says in the same Sermon that a full assurance of this arrives not to any Man till near, or after Death. In answer to this it may be observ'd that there were many in his Time, as well as there are still, who extended the inward witness further than they ought; these affirming that, after assurance of acceptance with GOD, by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit, they were sure of eternal Glory; it being impossible after this to fall finally from Grace. This, as being contrary to Holy Scripture, this Bishop denies; affirming that the inward witness is not to be look'd upon as a proof of any such thing. But so far is he from intimating, or saying, that the inward witness is not an assurance of the pardon of past Offences, and present acceptance with GOD, in favour of all such, that he declares the contrary as plainly as words can express. So that, his explanation of this mercy properly considered, this Bishop is as full in what I contend for as I could desire. And indeed it would have been surprising if he had not: For every one, whose experience has shewn him the way and manner of the operation of the Holy Spirit, knows that these things are so. But, to convince those, who have never experienc'd the power of the Holy Spirit, permit me to ask the following questions. Are not the thoughts, thrust into the minds of Christians at the times of publick and private worship, to be accounted the suggestions of evil Spirits, intended to draw off their

minds

minds from a proper attention upon such Occasions? And if so, why may not the Holy spirit suggest to the Souls of those, that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, such thoughts, as serve to convey the comfort and satisfaction I am now speaking of? Sure it must be reasonable to admit as much as this. But, whether this be allow'd or not, the sacred Scriptures put it out of dispute: For says St. Paul in the 14th Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans; *The Kingdom of GOD is righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*: In the 15th. *We rejoice in the hope of the glory of GOD, because the love of GOD is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. We also joy in GOD thro' our LORD JESUS CHRIST*: And in the 8th, *For as many as are led by the spirit of GOD they are the Sons of GOD, who received the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father: The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the Children of GOD*. But in the 1st Chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians he is very full in this matter in these Words; *For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in Power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance: And ye became followers of us and of the LORD, having received the word in much Affliction, with Joy in the Holy Ghost*. The same Apostle may be observ'd also telling the Corinthians in the 1st. Chapter of his 2d. Epistle, that *GOD hath sealed us and given us the earnest of his spirit in our Hearts*: in the 5th Chapter of the same Epistle that *GOD hath given us the earnest of his spirit*: And in the 1st. Chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians are these Words; *In whom also, after ye believed, ye are sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance; until the Redemption of the purchased possession to the Praise of*

of his Glory. St. John also in his 1st general Epistle is as clear and positive concerning the *Inward witness of the spirit*; as will plainly and comfortably appear, to every impartial Examiner of that part of his sacred writings. The same delightful Doctrine the pious and learned Mr. Duke may be observ'd preaching in his Sermon upon the Holy Ghost, P 227 and 8. But so particular herein is that remarkably great and good Man Dr. Barrow, in his Sermon upon the divinity of the Holy Ghost (who agrees with me in the remarks beforemention'd) that I shall insert these his own Words, mention'd Vol the 2^d P. 505. "It is also another part
 " of the Office of the Holy Ghost to assure us
 " of GOD's gracious love and favour; and that
 " we are his Children; confirming in us the hopes
 " of our everlasting Inheritance. We feeling our-
 " selves to live spiritually by him, to love GOD,
 " and goodness, to thirst after righteousness, and to
 " delight in pleasing GOD, are thereby rais'd to
 " hope GOD loves and favours us; and that he
 " having by so authentick a seal ratified his word
 " and promise, having already bestow'd so sure a
 " Pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful first
 " Fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder
 " design'd and promised us, of everlasting Joy and
 " Bliss."

This is the Addition, or Effect of applying the merits of CHRIST, which renders Faith perfect, or Justifying; and by which any become capable of yielding those earnest endeavours of Obedience, to which is made the promise of rewards in the New Testament; greater or less in proportion to the greater or less endeavours of those that exercise them.

As then this addition to believing what CHRIST has done, and suffer'd for us, or way of applying CHRIST's merits, is so necessary as well as com-
 fortable

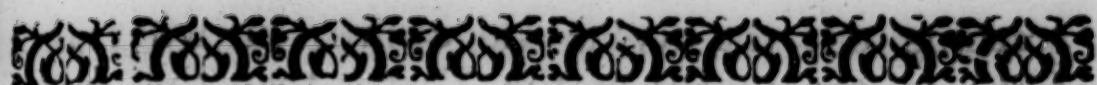
comfortable, I expect to be ask'd whether there is a
 possibility of being deceiv'd in this matter; i. e.
 whether we may not suppose that we are favour'd
 with this blessing when we are not? To this
 question it may be answer'd, that the evil spirit
 is observ'd to Ape G O D in every thing as much
 as possible; and therefore he may reasonably be
 suppos'd the more desirous of deceiving such as
 these in this manner; in regard this is the only
 way he has of injuring them, and this he perceives
 the necessity of from their being at the point of
 getting out of his reach. And that he is not de-
 ficient in this respect, appears from the false per-
 swasion he artfully occasions in many; thereby in-
 clining them to conclude, that what they at such
 times feel is the work of the Holy spirit, and
 that they are thus put into a justified state; tho'
 their actions, or doctrine, or both, are a plain proof
 that they were never justified: For, unless such an
 alteration is made in them as consists in an aver-
 sion to sin, and an earnest desire to act so as to please
 God, what those, who pretend to have been fa-
 vour'd with this mercy, suppose to have been the
 work of the Holy spirit, cannot be. A proof of
 this we find in a Remark, intended as a rule to
 direct us in this case, made by no meaner a per-
 son than Bishop Taylor in these words, mention'd
 in the 24th. and 25th. Pages of his Ductor Du-
 bitantium; " Care is to be us'd that Boldness is
 " not mistaken for peace, and hardness of heart for
 " a good Conscience. It is easy to observe the
 " difference, and no man can be innocently abus'd
 " in this affair. Peace of Conscience is a blessing
 " given to all holy penitents more or less, at one
 " time or other, according as their repentance pro-
 " ceeds and their hope is exercis'd: But it is not
 " to be judg'd of by sense, and ease, but by its
 " proper causes: It never comes but after fear, and
 " labour,

“ labour, and Prayers, and watchfulness, and Assiduity; and then what succeeds is a blessing, and a fair indication of a bigger. ” By which he meant that an inward persuasion of acceptance with GOD alone, *i. e.* unattended with a love for Piety, and abhorrence to evil, succeeding a proper penitential Faith, is not to be depended on as an assurance of being reconciled to GOD. But, when all these are found together, they amount to a full assurance that this inestimable mercy is vouchsafed.

Whenever therefore we find ourselves affected in the manner beforemention'd, and more especially after such Tryals as are describ'd in my Sermon upon Regeneration, and after the Arrival of an hatred to sin and a love for Piety and Holiness, we may safely conclude that our Faith is perfect; that it may be accounted lively or Justifying; and that we are assuredly in a state of Salvation: For this is the way the *Holy Spirit beareth witness with our Spirits that we are the Children of GOD*; this the way by which we may judge of the goodness of our spiritual Condition; this the Receipt by which it appears, that our debt is paid; and by which we are assured that no bitter things can be found written against us. So that, unless we have the marks beforemention'd to know by whether our Faith be compleat or not, or are using the means necessary for that purpose, we may depend upon it our Faith is only a dead Faith; and consequently such as will avail us nothing when we are call'd before a righteous and tremendous Judge. Of such vast moment and concern, ye see, is the distinction between the Faith which is too generally accounted sufficient to Salvation, and that describ'd by St. Paul in these Words; *Therefore being justified by Faith we have Peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Now to GOD, &c.

S E R M O N.



S E R M O N III.

On the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

R O M A N S VIII. 9.

*Now if any Man hath not the Spirit of CHRIST,
he is none of His.*

THESE words, properly considered, shew us, not only the Value, but the necessity of the Assistance of the Holy spirit, the effect of Justifying Faith: For as, on the one hand, they set forth the power given to those favour'd with this inestimable mercy, so, on the other, the great mistake of those who pretend to be GOD's Children, and yet are unable to produce this assistance as a proof that they are so; all other pretences being declar'd insufficient for this purpose in these positive terms; *If any Man hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of His.*

I shall therefore in my further discourse upon these Words undertake to prove first, that the way of reaching out the Divine Aid to Mankind consists in what is set forth in them; that this is sufficient to answer all Ends of a Religious Nature to those that are favour'd with it; and that this was always so apprehended by our Church, as well as that it is so at present.

And secondly afford such directions as are, not only proper Inferences from the remarks contain'd in my first proposition, but such as will always disappoint the envious attempts of the malicious enemy of our salvation against us.

First I shall undertake to prove, that the way of reaching out the divine Aid consists in what is set forth in the words of the Text; that this is sufficient to answer all Ends of a Religious Nature to those that are favour'd with it; and that this was always so apprehended by our Church, as well as that it is so at present.

That this was the way and means design'd by the Authour of Mankind's Redemption, not only to convey to them a knowledge of that wonderful Work, but ability to secure to themselves the Advantages arising from it, will appear to all, who duly reflect on what the sacred Writings mention concerning it. Says the Prophet Isaiah, foretelling thereby the happy effects of it, as well as the mercy itself, in the 3d Chapter of his Prophecy in these Words; *Until the Spirit be poured out from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful Field: Then Judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and Righteousness remain in the fruitful Field: And the work of Righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of Righteousness quietness and assurance for ever: i. e.* The Holy spirit will instruct and enlighten those, who were before as much void of the effects of this assistance, as a wilderness is of those things produc'd by a fruitful soil. Then will there be as delightful an Alteration wrought among these as the changing of the wilderness into a fruitful Field: For thereby will all these be so happily influenc'd as to experience the Valuable Power of the Holy spirit; these being not only mov'd to the constant exercise of Religious Duties, but favour'd with that inward Peace and comfort, that Joy and satisfaction, which the Operation of the Holy spirit occasioneth in them; and which this Holy spirit excites in whomsoever he is pleas'd to reside with.

The same joyful gladness we find the Prophet Joel also describing in the 2d Chapter of his Prophecy, in these words; *Fear not O Land, be glad and rejoice,*
for

for the LORD will do great things: And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall Prophecy; your old Men shall dream dreams, your young Men shall see Visions: And also upon the Servants and upon the handmaids in those Days, will I pour out my Spirit. Hereby the Prophet foretold the great joy, which the blessed effects of Man's Redemption by CHRIST, consisting in the Divine Assistance procur'd by it, would afford: For so great does he assure us would this be, that it would be extended to all Persons; and to some among them in so great degrees as to discover itself in the Gift of Prophecy, or foretelling things to come, if the word Prophecy be understood in that sense; several in the first Ages of Christianity having been remarkable in this respect: For so the sacred writings affirm concerning four Daughters of Philip; and of Agabus also, who foretold the Persecution of St. Paul in Judea. But as these Words seem rather to foretell the vouchsafing of greater degrees of spiritual Assistance; *i. e.* The knowledge of the Glorious things brought to light by the Gospel, it may not be amiss to understand, that hereby common and ordinary Persons would be enabl'd to apprehend the deep things of GOD; that this would enlighten Persons in Old Age, whose Eyes had been long shut against the wonderful things of GOD's Law, as well as those of tender and unexperienc'd Years; and that both young and old would be fully instructed by this Divine Assistance: And tho' it may be here observ'd that many, in Ages before our LORD's appearance in the World, were favour'd with great degrees of spiritual Assistance, yet it must be observ'd also that that Mercy was vouchsafed for the sake of CHRIST; GOD having an Eye to his Merits, and upon that Account thus indulging those, so extraordinarily distinguish'd, throughout all the

Ages before our LORD's sufferings: For plainly will it appear, to every careful Examiner of the sacred Writings, that in this light this Doctrine ought to be view'd. But that the most plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, as well as the clear revelation of this mercy, was reserv'd to Grace the glorious Days of the Gospel, not only the experience of all Ages, since the first promulgation of it, is a manifest proof, but the New Testament also: Nay our LORD himself may be observ'd saying, that the Work of the Gospel cannot be carried on without this spiritual Assistance in these Words; *Without me* (i. e. this spiritual Assistance) *ye can do nothing*. And therefore he commanded his Apostles not to presume to enter upon it without this help in these Words, mention'd in the 1st Chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles; *And being assembled together with them JESUS commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, says he, ye have heard of me*. This, we find, they did; and that, upon the Day of Pentecost, they received the qualification necessary for the business they were to engage in; and in so surprizing a manner as enabl'd common and plain Men to confound, and over-reason the wise and learned of the World: Nay to speak different Languages as fluently as if they had been their Mother Tongue: And as these so well knew the advantage of this wonderful mercy, and the impossibility of understanding, or of performing the duty of a Christian without this necessary Divine Aid, they laid their Hands upon those they baptiz'd; thereby conferring this benefit upon them.

In answer to this perhaps it may be objected, that we are not to expect what the Apostles, or Primitive Christians, were favour'd with in this respect; and therefore what is before remark'd cannot be applicable to us at present. But this Objection

tion will appear to be of no Force, when it is consider'd, that the same is equally necessary for all without distinction in all Ages: For without this those of private Stations can no more quit themselves well therein than the Apostles could in their publick; and therefore we find them recommending this as necessary for all, and shewing the Advantage of it. Among these St. Paul may be observ'd telling the Roman Church, in the 8th Chapter of his Epistles to them, that *there is now no Condemnation to them which are in CHRIST JESUS who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit: For the Law of the Spirit of life in CHRIST JESUS hath made them free from the law of Sin and Death*; and therefore he adds, that *the Righteousness of the Law may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*: i. e. Observing the inward Holy motions of GOD's Spirit is the way to be able to keep ourselves as much devoted to Piety, and the exercise of its Graces and Virtues, as GOD requires from us: For says the same sacred Writer in the same Chapter; *As they, that are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh, so those, that thro' the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the Body, shall live; those that are led by the Spirit of GOD, being the Sons of GOD*. In like manner is this Holy Apostle found affirming that there is no such thing as understanding the nature of our Christian Obligation, nor consequently what we ought to do, without the Assistance of the Holy Spirit: For says he in the 2d. Chapter of his 1st. Epistle to the Corinthians; *The things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD: The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discern'd: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things: For the spirit searcheth*

searcheth all things, even the deep things of GOD. It would be endless to cite all the passages of sacred Scripture, which prove that nothing can be done without the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, and that this is the way GOD intended to convey his Grace to us; *i. e.* Ability to render ourselves fit to be translated out of this Life into a better. I shall therefore content myself with only two more; which serve to prove that, when we are favour'd with this Blessing, that alone is sufficient to lead us right; and to afford us power also to act according to his Holy dictates at all times. The first of these is contain'd in these Words, mention'd in the 3d Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians; *That He would grant you according to the riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the Inner man, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of GOD, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think:* And the next is contain'd in these Words, in the 4th Chapter of the same Apostle's Epistle to the Philippians; *I can do all things thro' CHRIST that strengtheneth me.* By which this Apostle means that all Christians, as well as himself, are render'd capable of doing every thing, required of them, by the help of GOD's Holy Spirit.

Having thus prov'd that the assistance of the Holy spirit was the way, Divine Providence chose to convey ability to mankind to serve and obey Him, that this was not only foretold, long before it happen'd by the Prophets of the Jewish Church, but fulfilled in its due time, that this is sufficient to answer all holy ends in those that are endu'd with it, and that no person living can serve GOD acceptably, nor even know how to do so, without it, I shall now endeavour to prove as plainly,

that this was always the doctrine of our Church ever since its first establishment, and that it is so at present.

Both these assertions several of the Homilies contain'd in the book, call'd the book of Homilies, and publish'd soon after the Reformation, afford the fullest proof of. But as multiplicity of References, where the thing in question is not generally believ'd, is not only unnecessary, but would take up too much room, I shall cite only what may be observ'd in the Homily for Whitsunday. In that sermon we find the Authour of it affirming, " that the descent of the Holy Ghost
 " was undoubtedly to teach the Apostles and all
 " other men, that this holy spirit is he which giveth
 " Eloquence and utterance in preaching the
 " Gospel; which openeth the mouth to declare
 " the mighty works of GOD; which exciteth
 " a burning Zeal towards GOD's holy Word;
 " and which enableth all men boldly and cheer-
 " fully to profess the Truth in the face of the
 " whole world. So again is it remark'd therein
 " that it is the holy spirit which inwardly worketh
 " the Regeneration, or new-birth, in whom-
 " soever it is found; that he alone sanctifieth; and
 " that the mighty and secret working of him
 " within us ought all men to admire and wonder
 " at: " For, continues the Authour of this discourse,
 " it is no other thing but the Holy
 " Ghost that quickens the minds of men, stirring
 " up good and Godly motions in their hearts,
 " which are agreeable to the Will and command-
 " ment of GOD; such as otherwise of their own
 " crooked and perverse Nature they never would
 " have: For Man of his own nature is fleshly
 " and carnal; corrupt and evil; sinful and disobedient
 " to GOD; without any spark of goodness
 " in him; without any vertuous or godly motion

“ on; and given to evil thoughts and actions only;
 “ whereas all godly motions, if we have any at
 “ all, proceed from the Holy Ghost; who alone
 “ is the worker of our sanctification, and maketh
 “ us new men in CHRIST JESUS. Instances of this
 are also therein given in the persons of David and
 St. Paul; the one being hereby chang’d from a
 shepherd to a prophet; and the other from a per-
 secutor to a faithful minister of CHRIST. And
 as the Holy Spirit thus wonderfully changes,
 and alters those he converts, and regenerates, so,
 says the Authour of this sermon, he also dwells,
 and abides with them. He proves also from se-
 veral passages of sacred scripture that it is the will
 of GOD that he should do so; and then sets
 forth the advantage arising from this residence of
 the holy spirit, by the fruits of Righteousness, vi-
 sible in the conduct of all, so possessed, produc’d
 thereby. And, lest any should suppose this favour
 was design’d only for the Apostolical, or primitive
 ages of the Church, it is here affirm’d that this
 comforter was given to the Universal Church of
 CHRIST, dispers’d thro’ the whole World;
 instanc’d wherein it was manifestly so in those A-
 ges, wherein its Martyrs were so wonderfully sup-
 ported; Passages of Sacred Scripture cited also to
 prove, that this mercy was intended to continue
 till the end of the World; and concluded from
 thence, that the holy Ghost was given to the
 whole body of CHRIST’s Congregation.

The great advantage therefore arising from this
 Divine Aid, and the impossibility of acting for our
 own benefit without this inward Director, caus’d
 the Compilers of our Church Liturgy to express
 their sentiments of the great value, as well as the
 necessity of it, therein. This appears from the num-
 ber of places in it, in which GOD is address’d,
 and that in the most importunate manner, to vouch-
 safe

safe this mercy, and not to punish us so grievously
 as to take it away in his displeasure: For in the
 Absolution in morning and evening Prayer; after the
 general Confession, the Minister adviseth the People
 to join with him in beseeching GOD to grant
 them His holy Spirit; that way enabling them to
 lead a pure and holy life. In the Petitions after
 the LORD's Prayer, both Minister and People
 intreat the help of the holy Spirit to pray to, and
 praise GOD; that being the meaning of them:
 And in those, us'd before the Collects, they beseech
 GOD to make clean their hearts within them, and
 not to take his holy spirit from them. In the
 Prayers for the King and Royal Family we pray,
 that the holy spirit may so incline and lead them,
 that they may enjoy a prosperous State here, and
 eternal Glory hereafter. In the Litany we call up-
 on the holy spirit separately, as well as in con-
 junction with the Father and the Son, to have
 mercy upon us; and, by giving him the Title of
 good LORD, we beg him to deliver us from
 the several evils, and dangers particularly mention'd;
 and to hear us also in the several requests con-
 tain'd therein. In the Prayer for all sorts and con-
 ditions of Men we pray, that the holy spirit may
 guide and govern the holy Catholick Church; that
 the members of it may be led thereby into the
 way of Truth; and live in unity, peace, and right-
 eousness. The Collects before the Epistles and Gos-
 pels are so particular herein, under the words Grace
 and Spirit, that it would be tedious to shew in
 how many of these the holy spirit is requested;
 but in that part, which follows the declaration that
 we lift up our hearts to GOD in the Communi-
 on service, and of the reasonableness of returning
 thanks for his great goodness to us, we are taught,
 by a form appointed to be us'd on Whit-sunday
 for that purpose, to thank GOD for this very
 mercy;

mercy; and for which indeed we are also directed to praise him, in the form of praise in this service, every time we commemorate our LORD's death in the sacrament representing it. The exhortation at Baptism is still more particular concerning this matter. For it says; Forasmuch as all are conceiv'd and born in sin, and they, who live in the Flesh, cannot please GOD, and as CHRIST has commanded that all Mankind should thus come to him, there is a necessity for Regeneration by the Holy Ghost; and therefore, in the two first Prayers in that service, this blessing is requested in the most earnest and importunate manner. But the service of confirmation, as well as the form our Church Catechism consists of, and the service of Ordination, are as full, with regard to this doctrine, as words can express. The Benediction in the form appointed for Matrimony; The office of the Visitation of the sick; The exhortation in Ashwednesday's service, call'd the Commination; the Petitionary Psalm therein, as well as the Benediction; The prayer appointed to be us'd in the Sea service after a Victory; The last prayer in the service of the Restauration of King Charles the II; and many other places in the Liturgy, which I have taken no notice of, shew that our Church acknowledgeth the necessity, and advantage of the assistance of the Holy Spirit; and which, lest any should say they can't conceive how spiritual Knowledge and power can be convey'd to Humane creatures, I describe thus. The way we come to apprehend what others would have us acquainted with, who converse with us by word, is by the impression the words, proceeding from them, make upon the Brain; thereby exciting the understanding, (a faculty of the soul given it for that purpose,) to exert it's power to the apprehending of the meaning of the persons speaking; which being there weigh'd, and con-

sider'd

sider'd, and its good or evil perceiv'd, causeth the approbation or dislike, whereby the will is mov'd to choose, or refuse what is so presented to the understanding. The memory also, (another faculty of the soul,) can so present what it has to offer to the understanding, as to affect it in the same manner. And if so, why may not the holy Spirit be suppos'd to present proper suggestions to the soul also? such I mean as are most likely to convince those, they are offer'd to, of the necessity of accepting the advice given? Incline them also, not only by opening the understanding, and enabling it that way clearly to perceive it's own Interest, but by urging, moving, and pressing them at the same time, as one friend does another, to take the directions vouchsafed so graciously to them? But, whether this be acknowledg'd or not, this is not only a rational, but the true way of accounting for this inestimable mercy, as well as is the method taken by the Holy Spirit in aiding, and assisting humane creatures; and which every one may further satisfy himself in, by viewing Dr. Whitby's admirable preface to the vi Chap. of the II Epistle to the Corinthians, in his Comment upon the New Testament. So that all these things duly consider'd, I hope it will be allow'd, that I have effectually prov'd what I propos'd, as introductory to my second proposition; i. e. if this be the Christian doctrine, and that of our Church in particular, it concerns you to put in practice, as well as admit the reasonableness thereof, the following directions; in regard these not only necessarily arise from the remarks already made, but, if properly observ'd, will always disappoint the envious attempts of the malicious enemy of all Righteousness against us.

If then the assistance of the holy Spirit be the door of Grace, which GOD has thought fit to

open to us, and if his Infinite wisdom has judg'd this the best means of enabling us to act as becomes the expectants of Divine favour, who are we that we should presume to look contemptuously upon this inestimable mercy? How audacious must we be in refusing to enter into Life through the passage design'd by an Infinitely wise GOD to lead us thither? Shall such mean and despicable Creatures as we may justly stile ourselves, when compar'd with GOD, dare to set up our knowledge in opposition to his; as every one does, who refuses thankfully accepting this blessing in the manner it is reached out to him? Or shall those, whose eternal Salvation depends upon it, view this surprizing act of Divine goodness so coldly and indifferently, as to be quite unconcern'd whether they are favour'd with it or not? Sure a serious reflection will make us wiser than to throw away, what is of far greater value than the richest Treasures the world has to bestow! Sure a careful survey of our own interest will send us to GOD in the deepest acts of humiliation, for having so long disregarded this wonderful instance of Divine wisdom and compassion! Sure that alone will be sufficient to render us most importunate in an affair of so great moment; and which we can never be too solicitous about.

But further. If this be the only way of furnishing us with compleat Armour against all attacks of our spiritual enemies, and this alone is capable of rendring us proof against all assaults of that Artful and Crafty adversary, dayly labouring to destroy us, both by himself and his Agents; If there is no prospect of securing ourselves, without this defence, against the dangers we are continually expos'd to in this frail and uncertain state, and there is no other Rock to build upon but this only, what have we else to do, but to *lay hold on this Anchor both sure and stedfast*; this support

port and refuge in all difficulties and adversities; this never failing Protector, whose assistance is ready when our pretended great friends basely desert, and forsake us? I say if this be the only way of knowing how, and of becoming able to do what is requir'd of us in this life, what excuse can be urg'd in favour of those in Christian Countries, who neither know the meaning nor the benefit of this Divine Aid? suffering the soul to Perish for want of spiritual nourishment, thro' fear of running into Enthusiasm, as many do, is an excuse for disregarding this inestimable mercy not fit to be mention'd; not at all better than the fear of eating and drinking to excess would be for suffering the body to Perish for want of meat and drink. Enthusiasts there have been, who have pretended that by dreams and visions, and extraordinary Impulses upon their minds, they have been inform'd that things, contrary to the word of GOD, ought to be complied with; and who have that way impos'd upon the simple and unwary. But there is not the least danger of any such thing in what I am contending for. The assistance of the Holy Spirit I have prov'd to be a doctrine agreeable to the written word. I have shewn that we of this Church own, and daily confess this in that admirable form of prayer call'd our Church Liturgy. And that the most remarkably pious and learned among us, for several ages, held this, as a doctrine truly valuable, as well as necessary, their writings, now extant, leave us no room to doubt. As therefore it so plainly appears from unquestionable authority, that this is the doctrine of the Christian Religion, and of our Church in particular, it follows that those, who join in it's publick service, and account this Divine assistance Enthusiasm, plainly discover, either that they are miserably ignorant

rant of what they profess, and therefore ought to know, or that they are the worst of Hypocrites, in so frequently seeming to be in earnest in praying for this help when they are not, if not presumptuous to an amazing degree, in daily using words to G O D without meaning.

If therefore we would not be accounted persons so surprizingly weak in knowledge as not to understand what we profess; As we would not be accounted dissemblers with G O D, or contemners of his mercies; or be really so, which is much worse than being so accounted; And as we would not be without a friend capable of setting us right at all times, we must be careful, not only to value in reality, but to discover that we highly regard this greatest of all blessings on this side the grave; with this view contend with all our might for the necessity of admitting this doctrine; direct all to the use of the means prescrib'd to bring down this mercy from above, as well as of continuing it, when obtain'd; and never omit the same ourselves which we advise others to be careful in; always remembering, that nothing can afford a plainer proof of the want of this mercy than arguing against the usefulness, or necessity of it. So that, instead of contending that there is no such favour now attainable, let every one rather bewail his misfortune of being without so kind and powerful an assistant, and instantly resolve to prevent his continuing to live thus without G O D in the world: For, let the vain, and Inconsiderate, say what they will concerning the Enthusiastical disposition of those, that place a proper value upon this mighty Priviledge, and who advise o-
thers

(Serm. III.) CHURCH of ENGLAND. 51

thers to do so too, we know that, when
G O D speaketh, his word shall stand: And
whether he hath spoken, or not, in this case,
let these words determine; *Now if any man
hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, He is none
of his.*

Now to G O D &c.



S E R M O N



S E R M O N IV.

On Predestination and Election.

H E B R E W S II. 9.

But we see JESUS, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crown'd with Glory and Honour; that He by the Grace of GOD should taste death for every man.

TH E S E words set forth, as plainly as words can express, the necessity of admitting the doctrine I intend recommending in this discourse; *i. e.* the doctrine of universal Redemption. But as, instead of this, many are found holding that GOD hath decreed, or ordained before the world began, that some shall be sav'd, *i. e.* those stil'd His Elect, and that there are some which shall not, *i. e.* those stil'd Reprobate, or Vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; that those accounted the Elect obtain not this Title through the use of any means prescrib'd for that purpose, but that their Election is unconditional, or the effect of irresistible Grace; that those whom GOD is pleas'd so to call, or place within the number of the Elect, can never fall finally from that state; and that those, not so Elected, GOD hath also pre-ordin'd shall be accounted Reprobate, *i. e.* are under a necessity of being miserable to all eternity; of which Cain, Pharaoh, and Judas are Instances: I say, as these impious and unreasonable notions, arising partly from Ignorance, and partly from

from prejudice of Education, ought to be particularly examin'd, and confuted, I shall undertake to prove, that the work of Redemption is not limited, or confin'd to any certain number, but takes in the whole world; answering such objections as I find thrown in my way as I go on.

In order to this, 'twill be necessary to view the design of GOD in the Redemption of mankind by CHRIST. This, upon examining what is revealed concerning the miserable state mankind was in thro' Original sin, and the steps taken by an infinitely merciful GOD to set aside the ill effects of it, will appear to be a reinstating of Mankind in general in their former Condition of Salvation: For, as all without exception stood in equal need of deliverance, 'twas necessary that the Relief should be equal to the want; which the work of Redemption could not have been, if it had left any unprovided for. So that the supposition of such a Redemption, as includes any smaller number than the whole, renders our deliverance by CHRIST, not only an imperfect, and defective work, but unworthy of an Omnipotent, and infinitely merciful Agent; in regard such a deliverance must argue want of power, or will; neither of which can be imputed to the Authour of this compleat Deliverance: Nay so far from being a defective or imperfect work are we to look upon this, that we find, from what the Authour of it has thought fit to reveal concerning it, that it extends to all without exception; and that consequently the limiting, or confining it, to any certain number is only a mistake in those, who understand not the nature of it. And that this is as I have represented it, hear what the sacred scriptures, and our Church, have to say in this case.

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Says our LORD Himself concerning this matter, in the xviii Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *The Son of man came to save that which was lost*; And what that was we learn from these words of St. Paul, mention'd in the iii Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans; *All men have sinned, and are fallen short of the Glory of GOD* i. e. as all Mankind were so lost, and CHRIST came to save all such, it follows that he came to save all Mankind. Says our LORD also, in the xi Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *Come unto me all that Labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest*: and again to his Disciples, in the xvi Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel; *Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*: And says St. John concerning our LORD in the first Chap. of his Gospel; *John the Baptist came for a Witness, to bear Witness of the light, that all men thro' him might believe; He was not that Light, but was sent to bear Witness of that Light: That was the true Light which Lighteth every man that cometh into the world*. In the iii Chap. also CHRIST himself assures us, that GOD sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world thro' Him might be saved. The same doctrine we find St. Paul preaching to the Romans in these words, mention'd in the x Chapter of His Epistle to that Church; *For the same LORD over all is rich unto all that call upon Him; for whosoever shall call upon the LORD shall be saved*: In these also, in the ii Chapter of his Epistle to Timothy; *CHRIST Gave Himself a Ransome for all, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth*. And St. Peter also says the same thing in these words, mention'd in the iii Chapter of His II. general

general Epistle; *The LORD is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* The time would fail me, were I to mention all the Passages of sacred scripture, which declare this Truth. I shall therefore content myself with those already cited; these being more than sufficient to prove the Universality of man's Redemption. And that our Church understands this doctrine as I have describ'd it, appears from her Articles and Liturgy: For in the II Article are these words; "The Son, which is the word of the Father, took man's Nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for Original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men:" In the VII are these words; "In the old and new Testament, everlasting life is offer'd to mankind by CHRIST, who is the only Mediator between GOD and man:" In the XV. are these words; "CHRIST came to be the Lamb without Spot, Who by the Sacrifice of Himself once made, should take away the sins of the world:" And in the xxxi are these remarkable words; "The offering of CHRIST once made, is that perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both Original and Actual.

In the Homily appointed to be read upon Good Friday are these words; "So pleasant was the sacrifice and Oblation of His Son's Death, which he so obediently and innocently suffer'd, that He would take it, for the only and full amends for the sins of the whole world." And in the Homily of the misery of man are these words; "He is the Lamb of GOD for whose sake GOD is fully pacified, satisfied, and set at one with man: He is the Lamb of GOD which taketh away the sins of the world;" with much more to the same purpose, not only in these, but in other Homilies also, too tedious to cite in this place.

In our Church Liturgy, in that part of it call'd the Litany, are these words; That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men. In the prayer for all Conditions of men are these; "we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and Conditions of men;" and in the general thansgiving are these; "We give thee most humble and hearty thanks for thy goodness, and loving kindness to us, and to all men." In the prayer for the Church Militant in the Communion service are these words; "Almighty and everlasting GOD, Who by thy Holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men:" and in the prayer of Consecration in the same service are these; "Almighty GOD, our Heavenly Father, Who of Thy tender mercy did'st give Thine only Son JESUS CHRIST to suffer Death upon the Cross for our Redemption, Who made there, (by his own Oblation of Himself once offer'd,) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, Oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The same is also acknowledged in the form of Praise, appointed to be us'd in this service upon Easter day. In one of the Prayers in the office of Baptism is there mention made of the forgiveness of sins by the Blood of CHRIST, with an acknowledgment that this is extended to all, in a quotation of CHRIST's Command to the Disciples to teach and Baptize all Nations. In another prayer therein GOD is address'd, as the Aid of all that need, and the helper of all that flee to Him for succour. In the exhortation in the Office of Baptism of those of Riper years is mention'd, in proof of this doctrine, a quotation of these our LORD's words to His Disciples *Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every Creature: He that believeth and is baptiz'd shall be saved.* And in the Church

Catechism

Catechism are these words; "secondly I learn to believe that GOD the Son Redeemed me, and all mankind.

Thus positive are the Holy scriptures, the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of our Church, that the Redemption of mankind is Universal; to evade the force of which 'tis pretended by some, that by the word all, mention'd in the Passages of Holy scripture already cited, or any other which contain any terms betokening the same thing, is not meant all without exception, but some of all. So that, according to their way of understanding the word all, 'tis concluded by them, that CHRIST died not for all, but for some of all Ranks and orders of men. A poor distinction this! and such as no man would admit of in temporals; much less ought they to do so in things of the greatest moment, as those of a spiritual nature may well be accounted: For would any reasonable person suffer himself to be depriv'd of his Right to the following temporal advantage by so ridiculous an answer? Suppose a deceased friend, or Relation, had left by Will, to any of us in particular, all his Personality under the ensuing terms; I give and bequeath unto such a one all my stock in trade, all my household Furniture, and all my money and personal effects, which I die possess'd of: I say in such a Case, if the executor to such a Will, instead of delivering all the personalty of the deceased, should answer such a Legatee that he is not entitl'd to all, tho' the word all be mention'd in the Will, but only to some of all, or a part only of all the particulars before taken notice of, would any of us be satisfied with such an answer? I dare answer for him he would not. And if such an answer would be look'd upon as trifling, evasive, and insufficient in things of less value, how much more ought the same to be so accounted in a treasure

sure of inestimable value? But, lest this answer should fail of effecting the purpose it was intended for, 'tis pretended also, by the opposers of the doctrine of Universal Redemption, that it cannot be, that CHRIST intended to save all, because if he had, all would have been sav'd by his Redemption; the Contrary of which is manifest. It follows therefore that the work of Redemption was not design'd for all without exception. An answer to this may be given in the following Remark. Suppose an hundred, or more, of our King's Subjects were taken Captive, and remain'd in Slavery in a Foreign Kingdom; and that thro' the Compassion of the King, an Ambassador, dispatch'd for that purpose, Sail'd to the Kingdom, where these Captives are held in Captivity, with money enough to ransom them, and a Convenience of bringing them back to their own Country upon His Arrival there, that he agrees with the King of the Country for their Liberty; pays down what he demands for their ransom; informs all the Captives what he has done in favour of them; and that, upon their coming away with the Messenger, sent to bring them to their deliverer, and entring into the ship, provided to convey them to their Native Land, they may be deliver'd from their state of slavery. This done in favour of every one of these Captives, because one, or more of these, foolishly and obstinately refuses accepting the mercy offer'd him, can it be said in such a case that the King had not redeem'd him; the ransom being paid, the Prison doors set open, and liberty granted for all to go with the messenger, ready to conduct them to a place of safety? Is it not then as unreasonable an assertion to affirm that CHRIST did not redeem all mankind, because all do not accept their deliverance upon the terms propos'd? such refusal may prove the person, refusing spiritu-

al liberty, foolish and ungrateful to a surprizing degree, but can never prove that CHRIST redeemed him not? in regard the Ransome for his Redemption is paid; Notice given, by the word all, that none in particular can be excepted, unless it be his own fault; and the way, and means of entitling himself to the benefit of such Redemption, plainly enough reveal'd: Neither is it sufficient to say in this case that, by the word all, is not to be understood mankind in general, because some passages of Holy scripture mention the word all, where it is not to be taken so generally; in regard every thing, mention'd therein, is to be understood according to the nature of the thing describ'd; and the extent of it determin'd from thence. So that, as understanding the word all in this case so as to include mankind in general, so exactly answers this rule, and consequently best of all our Lord's Glorious design in redeeming all that wanted his Redemption, i. e. Mankind in general, it must be understood here so as to take in all without exception.

Having thus prov'd that the work of redemption extends to all mankind, it remains that I shew now, how this unlimited act of Divine goodness may be convey'd to every one in particular. This Benefit arises from a proper use of the means of Grace, already describ'd in my Exposition of the Church Catechism; which all without exception have the offer, and may receive the benefit of, if they please. The offer of Salvation, thus laid before the Redeemed, (i. e. all mankind) Whoever of them thinks fit to accept upon the terms propos'd becomes entitl'd to the benefit of it, both here and hereafter. Those, thus accepted, GOD calls His Sons and Daughters, His Children, His beloved, and his Elect: Nay, as a further encouragement to the acceptance of the offer of Salvation, it is revealed

vealed in Holy scripture, that GOD has decreed, and determin'd, even before the world began, that those, who would accept the offer of Salvation, should be entitl'd to His love and favour; the terms of affection beforemention'd; and the support and Protection promised to all such here, as well as eternal Glory hereafter, all theie being stil'd GOD's Elect; and that those, who refuse to accept the offer of Salvation, shall be stil'd Reprobate, or vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; and therefore become the Objects of GOD's displeasure here, and of his Vindictive Justice hereafter. And lest, for want of knowing when they are of the number of the Elect, the Redeemed should be without proper present Consolation, it has pleas'd GOD to shew all such how they may know when they are so; the marks of which are at large describ'd in my discourse upon Justification.

This is the Comfortable doctrine contain'd in these words, in the XVII Article of our holy Religion; and which proves that this is the doctrine of our Church; “ Predestination to life, is
 “ the everlasting purpose of GOD, whereby, be-
 “ fore the foundations of the world were laid, He
 “ hath constantly decreed by his Counsel secret to
 “ us, to deliver from Curse and damnation those,
 “ whom he hath chosen in CHRIST out of
 “ mankind, and to bring them by CHRIST to
 “ everlasting Salvation, as Vessels made to honour:
 “ Wherefore they which be endu'd with so ex-
 “ cellent a Benefit of GOD, be called according
 “ to GOD's purpose by His spirit working in
 “ due season, they, thro' Grace obey the calling,
 “ they be justified freely: They be made Sons of
 “ GOD by Adoption: They be made like the
 “ Image of his only begotten Son JESUS CHRIST:
 “ They walk religiously in good works: and at
 “ length by GOD's mercy, they attain to ever-
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"lasting felicity. As the Godly consideration of
 "predestination, and our Election in CHRIST
 "is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable com-
 "fort to Godly persons, and such as feel in them-
 "selves the working of the spirit of CHRIST,
 "mortifying the works of the flesh, and their
 "earthly members, and drawing up their mind
 "to high and heavenly things; as well because
 "it doth greatly establish, and confirm their faith
 "of eternal salvation to be enjoy'd thro' CHRIST:
 "as because it doth fervently kindle their love to-
 "wards GOD: so for curious and carnal persons,
 "lacking the spirit of CHRIST, to have con-
 "tinually before their eyes the sentence of GOD's
 "predestination, is a most dangerous downfall,
 "whereby the devil doth thrust them into des-
 "peration, or into Wretchlessness of most unclean
 "living, no less perilous than desperation." An
 admirable remark this! For how is it possible for
 the Natural man, who knows nothing of the doc-
 trines leading to this comfortable one, to receive
 any consolation from it? As he has none of the
 marks beforemention'd to prove that he is a Child
 of GOD, or within the number of the Elect, but
 on the contrary knows that he is not of this num-
 ber, without such information as may convey to
 him a proper notion of the Christian Faith, pre-
 vious to this, a continual ruminating upon this de-
 termination of GOD cannot be expected to produce
 any better effects than those of despair, or a pro-
 fligate life. All such are therefore hereby advis'd
 not to concern themselves so much about this doc-
 trine, as those already describ'd leading to it; be-
 cause, as, with such a preparation, this is most com-
 fortable, so, without it, the most destructive effects
 may ensue.

As a further caution in this case this Arti-
 cle advises, as in these words; "Furthermore we

“ must receive GOD’s promises as they be set
 “ forth unto us in holy scripture: and in our do-
 “ ings, that Will of GOD is to be follow’d,
 “ which we have expressly declar’d unto us in the
 “ word of GOD; ” i. e. As GOD’s promises
 are conditional, we must receive them as such; and
 as our manner of living is expected to be accord-
 ing to the directions given us in holy scrip-
 ture, ’tis our duty to take care that it be
 so.

Now in objection to this it is said by some,
 that our Election is unconditional; that GOD’s
 manner of bringing any within the number of the
 Elect is by irresistible Grace, as well as that the
 Reprobate are under a necessity of being Vessels of
 wrath, fitted for destruction, these affirming that
 this part of the Redeemed never was Redeemed;
 and that those, within the Number of the Elect,
 can never finally fall from the state of Grace their
 Election places them in. All which absurd Noti-
 ons these undertake to prove from the XVII Ar-
 ticle, just now cited, and the sacred scriptures; both
 which as positively declare against them as words
 can express.

These say that it appears from this Article, that
 GOD decreed, before the foundations of the world were
 laid, that part of Mankind should be sav’d, and
 that those, so sav’d, are call’d GOD’s Elect; that
 others of them should be damn’d, and that these last
 are term’d Reprobate, or vessels of wrath fitted
 for destruction; and therefore these add that all,
 who hold otherwise, contradict the doctrine they
 profess to believe; that way becoming inconsistent
 with themselves. But I shall soon make it appear
 that those, who hold Universal Redemption, do
 neither contradict the doctrine of our Church, nor
 are inconsistent with themselves; it being a great
 mistake in these to imagine, that the XVII Arti-
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cle of our holy Religion, either destroys the doctrine of Universal Redemption, or establishes any such notion as GOD's decreeing the salvation, or damnation of any part of Mankind, i. e. his laying either under any necessity of being sav'd or damn'd. That this Article countenanceth no such Doctrine as GOD's obliging any to be happy, or miserable, will appear from setting forth what doctrine it teacheth, or is Contained in it.

This Article then teacheth that GOD hath decreed, before the foundation of the world, that whatsoever part of mankind shall be found accepting the offer of Salvation, (i. e. by using the means prescrib'd in sacred scripture for that purpose,) shall be entitl'd, not only to all the blessings mention'd in it, but accounted his Elect; and that whatsoever part of mankind shall be found refusing to accept the offer of salvation, shall not only be expos'd to his displeasure, both here and hereafter, but be accounted Reprobate or vessels of Wrath, fitted by themselves, (i. e. by wilfully refusing the offer of salvation in the use of the means leading to it,) for destruction. But such a Decree lays no man under any necessity of being either sav'd, or damn'd; this being only a proof that GOD could not be expected to do more for his Vineyard than he hath done: For, on the one hand, he hath made them the most enviting and gracious promises, to allure them to accept what will lead them to life and peace, and, on the other, pronounc'd the most dreadful threats, to deter them from omitting, or refusing to listen to the overtures of mercy afforded them in his holy word. And therefore, as our Church finds as much as this in the Holy Scriptures, it has thought fit to make one of her Articles declare the same; i. e. the effects of obeying, or disobeying the call of GOD, in the offer of Salvation. But so far is

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the doctrine, taught by this Article, from contra-
dicting the doctrine of Universal Redemption, and
therein causing those of our Church to be incon-
sistent with themselves, that these are two differ-
ent doctrines: For Universal Redemption is a Re-
velation of the effects of CHRIST's merits, with re-
gard to the extent of them; and Election is a Revela-
tion of the effects of the applying of those Merits. It
therefore can be no contradiction to say, as our
Church does in her Articles, homilies, and Litur-
gy, that the Merits of CHRIST are sufficient to
occasion the salvation of all Mankind; and that as
many of them as will apply those merits as the
sacred scriptures advise all to do, (i. e. in a pro-
per use of the means of Grace,) will be account-
ed GOD's Elect; those refusing to do so be-
ing also accounted Reprobate, as she intimateth in
this Article. So that, ye see, it is the mistake of
those, who understand not the meaning of the
Doctrine of our Church, which causes any to af-
firm it to be contradictory, or inconsistent with
itself. But that the Advocates for this false No-
tion understand one of her Articles, so as to ren-
der her doctrine contradictory, or inconsistent, need
not be matter of wonder to any; these having
made as free with the King of this Church in
His holy Word: For by understanding several
Passages of sacred scripture as these do, (i. e. to
support this false Notion,) they make the holy
scriptures contradictory, and inconsistent also. And
that they do so, will appear from the sense they
put upon the following passages, and their true
meaning set forth in answer to it, which these
cite in proof of this unreasonable doctrine.

But previous to this, in order the better to ap-
prehend the meaning of the several passages of scrip-
ture, usually cited in support of this great mistake,
be it always remember'd, that, as the knowledge
of

of GOD is infinite, He saw as clearly how every one would act before they came into, as he did after their appearance in the world; the Prophecys of the Old Testament being a sufficient proof of this. Hereby He was capable of fixing upon proper persons, as well as of revealing how they would act, in what Period of time, and in what part of the world, as Instruments in His hand, in the several ages of it to work his Will; i. e. by making choice of those to act in it as His Elect, which He foresaw would thankfully accept the offer of Salvation upon the terms propos'd in the Gospel, and be directed from time to time by the sacred dictates of His Holy spirit, such as Jeremiah, and others of his disposition; and therefore are these said to be predestinated to salvation; GOD having predestinated or predetermin'd before the world began, that mankind should have the benefit of the Glorious work of Redemption by having that part of it, which would hear the words of eternal life, become his Elect; be assisted from time to time, as the Holy scriptures declare they shall, by divine aid here; and, after that, be receiv'd into never-ending future Glory. And this the same Infinite knowledge, which shew'd GOD how all Mankind would behave in the world, shew'd him also the necessity of revealing, as an encouragement to his Elect to persist in their pious resolutions: for he foresaw as clearly what persecution and opposition these would meet with from their spiritual Enemies, the Antichristian Party in general, and the great Antichrist, the church of Rome in particular; and therefore he was pleas'd wisely to arm all these in time, by assuring them of such Protection here as their several exigencies should require, and of a sufficient reward for all their labours and sufferings hereafter; these being the reasons of GOD's having said so great things

things concerning his Elect in his holy Word: I say GOD's Infinite Knowledge shew'd him all this, concerning those that would be proper Instruments to be employ'd in the work of Piety, and also that others would be so obstinately set against themselves, as to reject the offer of salvation, and all admonitions leading thereto; and also who those would be, such as Pharaoh, Judas, and others of their disposition. As therefore GOD foresaw that such as these last would be proper persons to afford caution to others, by being suffer'd to proceed from one degree of evil to another, till, by making up the measure of their wickedness, they were ripe for vengeance, He foretold that these would be of the number of the Reprobate; i. e. of those who would reject the offer of salvation, and upon that account become Vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. GOD having decreed before the world began that all, who would continue thus obstinate, and irreclaimable, should be accounted with Him as Reprobate, or Objects of His Vindictive Justice. But then this fore-knowledge of GOD, (the Revelation of which should fill us with an holy admiration, instead of causing us to entertain unworthy thoughts of Him upon this account,) is no obligation upon the Elect, or Reprobate, to any particular manner of acting; all these being at full liberty to act as they shall think fit. On the contrary, this is only intended to shew us how great a GOD our GOD is, in Wisdom, and knowledge, and power; how infinitely gracious to those, that will suffer themselves to be call'd by him; and also that He was pleas'd to make this his Rule to act by concerning Mankind, as the Laws of Countries, made to protect the vertuous, and punish the vicious, are no obligation upon either to act otherwise than as they please, but as a Rule to proceed by concerning both: Neither is GOD in such a Case chargeable

geable with want of mercy, (I mean in so determining concerning the Reprobate,) any more than the Governours of Countries may, for making laws to punish Malefactors with death, and putting them in execution against all such; the fault being their own that they are so punish'd as the just reward of such actions; all these knowing, that the sentence of death was due to the actions it was intended so to punish before they so acted, and yet nevertheless would they violently thrust themselves by such actions into the mouth of this danger.

So that to distinguish aright in this case 'tis necessary to observe that the knowledge of GOD, which shew'd him how every one would act before he came into the world, is one thing; and so far the Holy Scriptures have revealed to us, which therefore we may safely believe concerning Him; but the laying any under a necessity, or obligation, of acting in such a particular manner is another; and of this, I mean that GOD does ever compel any man to act contrary to his own inclination, the Holy Scriptures no where say any thing; i. e. any thing that may countenance such a supposition. In order therefore to make this appear I shall now mention the most remarkable Passages of Scripture that relate to this Controversy; and shew, by giving you their true meaning, that they are far from supporting the doctrine they are usually cited for.

The first of these, which I shall here take notice of, is that mention'd in the xiii Chap. of the Acts of the Apostles in these words; *And as many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed.* This the advocates for this false notion say is a proof, that GOD pre-ordained some to life, and others to death eternal, because it is here said, that as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, whilst others, not so ordained, did not believe. But these consider not that the Greek word, in this place translated

translated ordained, signifies also disposed; and which, appears to be the proper meaning of it, because there is no mention made of the doctrine of Predestination throughout the whole Chapter. But, if there were, as this is a doctrine contrary to many Passages of Sacred Scripture, and the understanding the word, translated ordained, in the sense I give it, makes this passage agree with them, it is plain that this is its true meaning. It therefore ought to run thus; *As many as were disposed to eternal life believed: i. e.* as many, as were inclined to place a proper value upon the offer of Salvation, believed, or thankfully accepted it.

Another passage, quoted with the same view, is that mention'd by St. Paul, in the viii Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans, in these words; *For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be confirmed to the Image of His Son; that He might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified; and whom He justified them He also glorified.* By these words the Apostle gives us to understand that those, which G O D's foreknowledge shew'd him would accept the offer of salvation, and act from time to time according to the dictates of his holy spirit, He accounted His Elect; and that these He determin'd to be singularly gracious to by making them Holy by the powerful operation of His Holy spirit; thereby enabling them also to bear Chearfully, what sufferings they were to undergo in being like to C H R I S T in this world; and, after that, by making them glorious in the world to come, that they may be glorified together with C H R I S T. In favour of these, concerning whom G O D had determin'd so graciously, this Apostle tells us what method he was pleas'd to take in this gracious act of His: For he in-

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forms us that G O D called these according to the way, and manner of calling, prescrib'd in the Gospel; i. e. by making the offer of salvation upon the terms propos'd therein; that these, thankfully accepting it, G O D was pleas'd to justify, or accept as just, or righteous, by the imputation of the merits and Righteousness of C H R I S T applied to them; and that these, so justified, He was pleas'd to dignifie in such a manner as the beloved in CHRIST in this world usually are: For that the term glorified may well be understood in this sense will appear, from considering how glorious an Alteration the changing of a Natural man into a spiritual occasions; these being thereby enabl'd to think, speak, and act far more excellently than they ever did, or could before. But, allowing that the word (Glorified) relates to the future state of such, (tho' in my Opinion it does not,) yet that proves no more than this; i. e. that such, as GOD's Infinite knowledge shew'd him would act in Obedience to the sacred dictates of His Holy Spirit, He had predestin'd should enjoy his Kingdom of Glory: For no Intimation is there, that G O D laid these under any necessity of acting so as to be unable to avoid entering into Glory.

The same doctrine is also contain'd in these words, mention'd in the i Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians; *Having predestinated us to the Adoption of Children by JESUS CHRIST to himself according to the good pleasure of His Will: In whom also we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the Counsel of His Will.* But, as the answer already given, concerning GOD's knowledge and predetermination, is sufficient to shew in this, and all other passages, which mention predestination or Election, that no man is o-

blig'd to act otherwise than as he thinks proper, I need not particularly explain this last, nor cite any other for the sake of explaining them; but rather proceed to the Instances, given in proof of this mistake, which some so earnestly contend for.

Now to G O D, &c.



S E R M O N



S E R M O N V.

On Predestination and Election.

H E B R E W S II. 9.

But we see JESUS, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crown'd with Glory and Honour; that He by the Grace of GOD should taste death for every man.

IN a former discourse upon these words I proceeded so far in my description of Universal Redemption, and Election, as to come to the Instances, usually given in proof of the mistake already mention'd.

The first of these is that of Cain. But this is so far from establishing any such doctrine, as GOD's obliging any to be miserable thro' any decree, which lays them under a necessity of being so, that what is said concerning him proves the contrary: for tho' he suffer'd as the sacred Writings say he did, and this the Omniscience of GOD could not but foreshew Him, even before the foundation of the world, yet GOD clears himself of the unjust Charge, consisting in compelling him to bring his sufferings upon himself, by these words, mention'd in the iv Chap. of the Book of Genesis; *If thou dost well shalt thou not be accepted?* i. e. Cain was hereby inform'd, when he was displeas'd at GOD's discovering greater marks of approbation towards his brother Abel than him-
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self, that this was occasion'd by his own means: For, instead of recommending himself to G O D, by offering his heart with the *fruit of the ground*, as Abel did in his *Offering of the firstling of his Flock*, he only made a shew of Piety, being in reality far from what he pretended to be. This, as G O D plainly perceiv'd it, He was pleas'd as plainly to tell him was the thing, which render'd him Odious in his sight: Whereas, had he been a real servant of G O D, he had never been rejected; But, as he disregarded the way and means of becoming acceptable to G O D, which his brother Abel had made a good use of, he brought upon himself the Curse describ'd in this Chapter.

Another Instance, usually produc'd in this case, is that of Esau and Jacob, mention'd in the ix Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans in these words; *For the Children not being yet born, neither having done good or evil; that the purpose of G O D according to the Election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, the Elder shall serve the younger, as it is written Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* Thro' a misconstruction of this Text it is asserted that Jacob and Esau, even before they were capable of pleasing, or displeasing their Creator, were declar'd beloved and hated of G O D. Consequently these must be under a necessity, thro' a predetermin'd Election and Reprobation, of acting so as to occasion that love and hatred of G O D. Whereas the words before cited mean no such thing; neither will they bear any such construction: For the persons of Jacob and Esau are so far from being meant in any part of them, that no personal Election of Jacob to eternal life, nor personal Reprobation of Esau to eternal death, can possibly be intended in them; in regard the observations in the context destroy such a supposition;

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Nay confine this love and hatred of GOD to the posterity of Jacob and Esau, and not to themselves in their own persons; and to temporal blessings only. A proof of this we have in these words; *The Elder shall serve the younger.* These are a quotation out of the xxv Chap. of Genesis express'd thus; *And the LORD said unto her, two nations are in thy womb; and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: And the one People shall be stronger than the other People; and the Elder shall serve the younger.* Now nothing can appear more plainly than that the Apostle could not mean the persons of Jacob and Esau in this quotation: For Esau the Elder never did serve Jacob the Younger. On the Contrary Esau liv'd in great Pomp and Splendour, while Jacob was in service under his Uncle Laban; Jacob being met at his return from that service by his brother Esau, attended with four hundred Men; and glad to make his peace with him at the expence of a Present of great value: neither does it appear in any part of the sacred scripture, that Esau was ever in subjection to Jacob in the latter any more than he had been in the former part of his life. It follows therefore that GOD's intended kindness, describ'd by his love to Jacob, consisted in preferring the Posterity of Jacob, with regard to the possession of the promis'd land, before that of Esau; and which rejection of the Posterity of Esau, in this temporal blessing, was describ'd by the hatred of GOD to Esau; and that the persons of Jacob and Esau are no more to be understood, from the mention of their Names in this Passage, than the spiritual goodness or badness of their Condition, So that, as this doctrine stands upon a false foundation, what is built upon it falls to the ground.

All that can be gather'd from this observation of the Apostle concerning Jacob and Esau is, that G O D, long before his distinguishing the Posterity of one of these brothers from that of the other, by His greater kindness to that of the one than to that of the other, had determin'd to confer the temporal mercies beforemention'd in the manner he did; which, as what He so gave was His own, He might sure do with as he pleas'd; and that therefore the Jewish Church ought not to be displeas'd with G O D on account of his goodness to the Gentiles: For as the Gentiles were admitted as G O D's Children, meerly thro' His Grace and free Gift, procur'd in favour of them by the Redeemer of the World, so had the Jewish Church their Adoption thro' the like Grace, and free Gift of G O D; these having no more merited any thing from G O D, at the time of His promising greater kindness to the Posterity of Jacob than to that of Esau, both being then unborn.

Another Instance, intended to establish the same doctrine, is that of Pharaoh, said by these to have been predestinated to act as he did, as being a Vessel of Wrath fitted for destruction; and which we find mention'd in the ix Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in these words, *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee; and that my name might be declared throughout all the Earth.* The use made of these words is to prove, that G O D lays some under a necessity of acting so as to become Reprobate; and that Pharaoh was one of these, whom G O D raised up on purpose to afflict and drown at last in the red Sea. Whereas they prove no more than that G O D, *by whom Kings reign, and who putteth down one and setteth up another,* knew, long before this King's advancement to the throne,

throne, how evil a disposition he would be of, as well as that he would continue therein, notwithstanding all the advice to the contrary that could be given him, and therefore, as he was a fit Instrument to work his glory, he permitted him to sway the *Ægyptian* scepter at that time; and also that, when men have too long resisted the kind motions of His holy spirit, *G O D no longer striveth with them*; that He withdraweth from them his usual means of Conviction; that he permitteth the enemy of their Salvation to affect them *with strong delusion*, which the Apostle calls giving them up to a *reprobate Mind, till they have made up the measure of their wickedness*; and that they are thereby made examples of caution to others, by suffering the Divine wrath in this world, as Pharaoh was. But then it can't be said that *G O D* lays these under any necessity of thus becoming Vessels of Wrath, fitted for destruction; their punishment being always brought upon themselves by their own means, the effect of their stopping the Current of Divine Mercy. Nor are these any more to be regarded, when they say their doctrine is prov'd from these words; *He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will He hardeneth*: For by these the Apostle meaneth no more than that *G O D* is the best Judge, whose offences are not so great as to exclude His mercy, and whose are so heinous as to cause Him to withdraw from them the blessed Influences of His holy spirit, the effect whereof is impenitence and hardness of heart; and therefore at liberty, without the charge of injustice, to give such up to obduracy, or instantly to punish them as He shall think fit. But, lest these several Passages should not be sufficient to establish their false doctrine, these add the following words, mention'd in the same Chapter; *Hath not the Potter power*
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over his Clay of the same lump, to make one Vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

From hence these argue that, as all are as much the property of GOD as the Clay is that of the Potter, if GOD thought fit to make some of his People Vessels of Honour, and others of dishonour, (i. e. to predestinate some to Salvation, and others to damnation,) He may do so without being call'd to account, for having so done, as much as a Potter may work up his Clay into what kind of Vessels he pleases; and therefore these add, that GOD hath done this; and that he is merciful also in so doing, because his kindness is hereby extended to many, when it is due to none. Part of these remarks may be admitted; I mean that all Mankind are within GOD's power to do with them as he pleases; and that, if he had predestinated them all to damnation, those, so predestinated, could not have call'd him to account for acting so unkindly by them. But His Infinite Power GOD is too good a Being to use in any such manner; neither did He ever so predestinate any to Condemnation; this being not what the Apostle means by the Simile. So far from this, that he only intended shewing by it, that GOD is at liberty, without the charge of injustice, either to punish grievous offenders immediately, or to reserve them, by deferring the effects of His displeasure, for such severity of punishment as He shall think fit to inflict on them; thereby giving the Jewish Church to understand that, though they were not fallen upon immediately, if they persisted in their Obstinacy and Infidelity, they might in the end suffer as dreadfully as Pharaoh did before them, and also that GOD is equally at liberty, without the charge of injustice, to admit the Gentiles into the number of His Elect upon their believing in CHRIST. Neither is the reason assign'd for

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GOD's acting in as arbitrary a manner as these affirm he does in this case, at all convincing that this is not a false notion; I mean the great mercy of GOD, consisting in his liberality to the Elect, none of all which deserv'd any such bounty; this pretended mercy, upon examination, appearing to be the greatest cruelty: For where is the mercy of that King who conferreth singular favours upon some of his Subjects, and murders all the rest? Or where is the mercy of GOD in saving, or predestinating a few to salvation, and predestinating, or laying infinite numbers under a necessity of being miserable to all eternity? This is making GOD a greater Tyrant than ever yet appear'd in the world. 'Tis saying that He hath done what He never intended; and charging Him with that which is inconsistent with His goodness.

But further; if GOD predestinated any so as to lay them under a necessity of being eternally condemn'd, is not this fixing the Character upon GOD which our LORD gives to the Devil, in these words; *He was a Murderer from the beginning?* And is not this affirming, that GOD is less loving, and tender to them, than Mankind is observ'd to be towards each other? For says our LORD, in the vii Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your Children:* Whereas, if this were the case, GOD would be more deficient herein than men are found to be; in regard this tends to prove that GOD, not only withholds Acts of kindness from His Creatures, but obliges them to be inevitably miserable, even before they could have offended him at all: Nay this tends to prove that GOD is unjust: For what can be more so than to oblige a Man to act so as to deserve eternal Condemnation? This tends to prove also that GOD is the Authour of sin; in regard what a Man does, when under a ne-

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cessity from GOD of so doing, GOD, by whose impulse such a one acts, is properly the doer of it. This tends to prove likewise that GOD is false and perjur'd: For how often is He found declaring, and even swearing, in His Holy Word, that He would have all come to the knowledge of the truth, and that He *willeth not the death of a sinner*? And is not this making CHRIST guilty of falsity and Hypocrisy, in making an offer of Salvation to all, (as he did by commanding His Apostles to preach the Gospel to every Creature,) when in reality He does not? The false, and Hypocritical among Mankind, are often found thus deceiving, and imposing upon each other; but that a GOD of truth, and holiness, should be charg'd with acting in such a manner, is such horrid blasphemy as ought never to enter into the heart of Man. This is also depreciating, and undervaluing the glorious work of Redemption: For the Numbers, thus predestinated to damnation, in the opinion of these, is very great, and that of the Elect very small in comparison of the other. Neither is there any thing more discouraging to the exercise of Religious duties than this consideration: for to what purpose should a man *spend and be spent* in the Cause of CHRIST, rise early, sit up late, *cast his bread upon the waters*, suffer hardships and persecutions, and deny himself by frequent acts of Mortification, for the sake of being better qualified for his spiritual work, and of recommending himself to the love and favour of GOD, if, after all, he might fail of Salvation, on account of his not being within the number of those that are predestinated to life? And what liberty does this afford to the vain and Licentious? These are apt enough to proceed to the greatest length in vice, without such a Consideration as this to enyite them to it. But, with this, 'tis no won-

der that these are found answering their Reprovers to the following effect. Neither we, nor ye, can tell whether we are predestinated to life or death. It may be to the latter. And, if so, we can but be miserable by taking our fill of pleasure; and we cannot be less so by taking your advice. As therefore this is but an uncertainty, and a life of pleasure is most agreeable to our inclinations, that we will make our Choice, resolving not *to withhold our hearts from any joy.*

The last instance of particular persons being thus predestinated to misery, which I shall here take notice of, is that of Judas.

Our LORD, I acknowledge, calls Judas the Son of perdition; and his ungrateful and perfidious behaviour proves, that he well deserv'd that Title, but that he was under any necessity of being so I deny; and that I am not mistaken herein I prove thus. That Judas had the benefit of being eye, and ear-witness of our LORD's miraculous works, as well as of His admirable directions, is plain from the account given of both by the Evangelists: For we find no remark made, throughout the whole New Testament, of his being absent, or otherwise employ'd, to prevent his constant attendance upon his LORD, any more than the rest of the disciples. So far from this, that he was admitted as well as the rest of the disciples when the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper was Instituted; Nay, at the very time, when his evil heart was meditating on the treacherous act, which wrought his destruction, he was caution'd of the danger of it in these words, mention'd in the xxvi Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *But woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: It had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas which betrayed Him, answered, and said, Master, Is it I? He said unto him, thou hast said.* A plain proof
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this, that nothing was wanting on GOD's part to have kept him to his duty, as well as to have brought him back again, when he had departed from it; that the effect of his amazing falsity, and ingratitude, was brought upon him by his own means; and that what is said concerning this matter shews only, that GOD's Infinite knowledge render'd him acquainted with this treacherous act long before it was put in execution; by no means that GOD laid him under any necessity of betraying so good a Master.

As far from the truth also are these in supposing our LORD's words tend to prove what they cite them for, mention'd thus in the xvii Chap. of St. John's Gospel; *I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.* These words they say shew, that some are predestinated to damnation, because CHRIST did not pray for them, as knowing that they could not be sav'd: Whereas they mean no such thing; this being their true meaning. As I am now going out of the world, and these my Disciples are to supply my place in it, and as my Infinite Knowledge shews me what need they'll have of extraordinary assistance, to enable them to act for the benefit of the rest of the world, I therefore at this time pray for these only; it being improper to join the rest of the world with these in the help I now ask in favour of them: For, as the rest of the world stand in no need of such help as is necessary for these, nor is any such intended for them, I cannot join these together in this prayer; providing properly for my Disciples being what I am now concern'd about. And that this must be our LORD's meaning, and not that he omitted praying for them, because they were predestinated to damnation, is plain for his praying for the world at the time of his Crucifixion in these words; *Father, forgive them, for they*

they know not what they do. So that, instead of our LORD's omitting to pray for the world at this time, on account of any part of them being predestinated to damnation, it plainly appears that his praying for the Disciples only at this time was for the sake of the rest of the world; that, thro' their directions, *they might believe, and know that the Father had sent him, and have life thro' his Name.*

Another Argument, in favour of this dangerous Notion, is drawn from the examples of many pious Ministers, and lay Christians, of this and other Protestant Churches, who were known to be of this Opinion; these concluding that this must be true doctrine, or so many holy, and learned members, of the Protestant Church would not have held it. But this cannot be inferr'd from hence: For, were Numbers any proof of the truth of any doctrine, the doctrine of the Papists must be true, and that of the Protestants false, because the Papists were far more Numerous than the Protestants. Rather ought the following remark to be made in this Case; i. e. that those many good, and learned men, who held this dangerous Notion, did not consider the consequences, nor the ill use, which is now, and hath been long made of it; and therefore they suffer'd prejudice of Education to mislead them. But it is not true that the greater part of the Protestant Church were of this Opinion: For I have prov'd that our Church in particular was not, by the doctrine contain'd in it's Articles and Liturgy: And tho' some of it's pious Ministers, and other members, might be deceiv'd herein, yet great Numbers of it can be produc'd, both of Ministers, and lay-Members, who have oppos'd it with all their power, as their Writings plainly shew. So that, instead of persisting in error, thro' the example of those, that were deceiv'd

deceiv'd in time past, we ought to esteem it a great blessing that all were not carried away with error; and no longer remain obstinately contending for that, which plainly appears to be contrary to the Written word; and more especially as the ill Consequences of this doctrine among those, that hold it, appear plainer now than they did formerly, and render it necessary to give it up.

As therefore understanding the Passages of Holy Scripture, already cited, so as to favour this Notion, makes the doctrine of our Church contradictory and inconsistent, the Holy Scriptures contradictory and inconsistent also, and is attended likewise with such dreadful Consequences; And as understanding them in the sense, I have given them, so reconciles the different passages of Holy Scripture as to make them all agree, the doctrine of our Church to agree also with the Holy scripture, as well as preserves it from being accounted contradictory and inconsistent, and is attended with none of the dreadful consequences beforemention'd, I appeal to any impartial reader, whether all ought not to prefer a rational, and scriptural doctrine, before one, that hath neither reason, nor Scripture on it's side.

Having thus prov'd that the doctrine of Predestination, and Election, understood otherwise than our Church understands it, ought to be rejected, permit me now to shew, that Unconditional Election, irresistible Grace and final Perseverance, understood in the sense the Contenders for these false doctrines understand them, ought to be rejected also.

That all these are as unscriptural notions as the root, these branches proceed from, will appear from considering what the sacred Scriptures say concerning them: But, as the doctrine of unconditional Election, and final perseverance, are so closely connected as not to be easily separated, I shall speak of them together. But, before I do this, I shall say what I think necessary

cessary concerning irresistible Grace. This the Arguments, already mention'd, have shewn the unreasonableness of; these sufficiently discovering, that GOD layeth no man under any necessity of acting otherwise than as he pleaseth. I therefore need not give myself any further trouble in this respect, than citing such passages of Scripture as plainly contradict this notion. The first proof from Holy Scripture, which I shall here take notice of, that all mankind are at liberty to accept or refuse the offer of Salvation, is what is contain'd in the i Chap. of Prov. from verse 20 to the end; which being too long for this place, I refer all to. The next is that mention'd thus, in the xxx Chap. of the book of Deuteronomy; *I call Heaven and Earth to record against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live.* Another we have of the same signification, in the lxxv Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah in these words; *When I spake ye did not hear, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.* Our LORD also is found saying the same thing in these words, mention'd in the xxiii Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gather'd thy Children together as a hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* And in these, in the x Chap. of St. Luke's Gospel; *Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* As positive also is St. Stephen concerning this matter, in the vii Chap. of the Acts of the Apostles, in these words; *Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did so do ye.* Nor less so is St. Paul in these words, mention'd in the xiii Chap. of the Acts of the Apostles; *Beware therefore lest that come upon*

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*upon you which is spoken of in the Prophets, be-
hold ye despisers, and wonder and perish: and a-
gain in these; Then Paul and Barnabas waxed
bold, and said, it was necessary that the word of
GOD should first have been spoken to you: but
seeing ye put it from you, and Judge yourselves
unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the
Gentiles: And in these also, mention'd in the ii
Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans; Despisest thou
the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and
long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of
GOD leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy
hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to
thyself Wrath against the day of Wrath, and re-
velation of the righteous Judgment of GOD; who
will render to every man according to his deeds:
to them, who by patient continuance in well do-
ing, seek for honour, and glory, and Immortality,
eternal life: but unto them that are contentious
and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,
Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish
upon every Soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew
first, and also of the Gentile. But glory, and ho-
nour, and peace to every man that worketh good,
to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For
there is no respect of persons with GOD. These
several passages, and many more, which might be
added to them, prove plainly, that mankind are at
liberty to accept, or reject the offer of Salvation;
the Grace, given for the spiritual good of any, be-
ing intended to persuade, not to force: For, had it
been otherwise, instead of calling the acceptance of
Grace the obedience of Faith, as St. Paul does in
the xvi Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans, he
should have said, the Compulsion of Faith; and
our LORD instead of saying, ask and ye shall
have, should have said, ye need not ask, for have
ye shall, I will compel you to have; which com-
pulsive*

pulsive Language is no where us'd, but the contrary, throughout the whole Sacred Scripture. There is indeed a Passage in the Prophet Jeremiah, which the Advocates for this doctrine say is of a Compulsive Nature; which is usually cited by them to prove, that the Christian Covenant is unconditional; and which I might omit answering till I come to speak of that grand mistake; but, as it seems rather to belong to irresistible Grace, I shall mention it under this head. This is recorded in the xxxi Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Jeremiah in these words; *After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their GOD, and they shall be my People.* These words they explain thus; The Christian Covenant is of this sort; i. e. not I will, if ye will; but I will, and ye shall; not, if ye will do this, ye shall live; but ye shall do this, and live. In answer to this it may be observ'd, that it is surprizing to find any man of learning so dishonouring himself as to talk at this rate; the word, shall, being here no more than the sign of the future tense; i. e. to betoken the time to come: For, as this is a Prophecy of what was to happen in time to come, it could be no otherwise express'd. But further. This Prophecy seems to relate peculiarly to the Jews; and intended to shew that the time would come, in which they would be converted to Christianity. However, allowing it to be applicable to the Christian state in its first appearance, it only shews how powerful, and truly valuable, the assistance of the Holy spirit would be; to those I mean who would accept the offer of salvation by CHRIST upon the terms propos'd in the Gospel: For these words, mention'd in the iii Chap. of the Book of Revelation, are a sufficient proof that there is no such thing as irresistible

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Grace

Grace; *Behold I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my Voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* i. e. GOD, by his Holy spirit, His Holy Word, His Ministers, and by what other means he thinks proper, invites men at first to accept the offer of Salvation, upon the terms propos'd in the Gospel. After acceptance of this offer, when Christians begin to grow cold, and indifferent, He knocketh at the door again; admonishing them to be zealous and sincere. When Christians are fallen from grace by habitual sin, He repeateth his knocking; advising, and directing all such, to renew themselves by repentance. When this knocking at the door is heard, so as to cause the door to be open'd; i. e. when Christians take the advice afforded them, and desire the Holy spirit, by using means proper for that purpose, to make their bodies His Temple, that Holy spirit enters into, and resides with them, as long as such bodies continue a fit residence for so Holy an Inhabitant. But, notwithstanding all this condescending goodness on the part of GOD, this Holy spirit, thus frequently knocking, still waiteth at the door; is never observ'd to open the door himself; much less to use violence in bursting it open. So that, if the Word of GOD be true, those, that wait for irresistible Grace in either of the respects beforemention'd, may wait till the day of Grace is over, it being a rule with the Holy spirit to depart where the door, after frequent knocking, is not open'd; nay a favour sufficient is it that he should condescend to do so much as this.

This Notion of irresistible Grace being thus proved to be a mistake, I now proceed to shew that there are Conditions in the Christian Covenant performable on the part of Christians; and also to set forth the Nature of them.

That there are conditions performable on the part of Christians, in order to be admitted into the Christian Covenant; i. e. Faith and repentance, I have already prov'd from our LORD's own words, as well as those of his Apostles, in my Exposition of the Church Catechism; and which, for brevity's sake, I refer you to. A further proof of this, are these words of our LORD, mention'd in the xiii Chap. of St. Luke's Gospel; *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise Perish:* And these of St. Paul in the xvii Chap. of the acts of the Apostles; *But he now commandeth all men every where to repent:* and these also in the xxvi Chap. *I shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the Coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to GOD.* As positive in insisting on Faith, as a condition for admission into the Christian Church, as St. Paul was for repentance, we find St. Philip in these words, mention'd in the viii Chap. of the Acts of the Holy Apostles; *If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst;* i. e. be admitted as a member of the Christian Church by Baptism. St. Paul says as much also concerning Faith in these words, in the ii Chap. of his Epistle to the Galatians; *Even we have believed in JESUS CHRIST, that we might be justified by the Faith of CHRIST:* and in these, in the i Chap. of his Epistle to the Ephesians; *In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy spirit of promise.* Thus does it plainly appear, from the sacred Writings, that there are conditions Performable on the part of Christians, previous to their admission as Parties in it.

That, after their admission, there are conditions performable on their part I prove thus. Says St. John to the Church of Laodicea in these words,

in the iii Chap. of his Book of Revelation; *Because thou art Luke warm, and neither Cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my Mouth: be zealous therefore and repent.* i. e. if those, that are admitted as Parties in the Christian Covenant, content themselves with a Lukewarm, or indifferent exercise of Religious duties, unless they repent of such behaviour, instead of being acceptable to GOD, they will be abhorred by Him. Those also, who fall from their regenerate state by habitual sin, must resolve to alter their Conduct, if ever they expect to be regarded by the most high; this being plain from these words, in the ii Chap. of the same Book; *Because thou hast left thy first love; Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do thy first works.*

And that those, renew'd by repentance, must continue making a proper use of their renew'd strength, if they expect to be rewarded hereafter, appears from these our Lords own words, mention'd in the xv Chap. of St John's Gospel; *If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is Withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned:* and from these of St. Paul, mention'd in the i Chap. of his Epistle to the Colossians; *And ye that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled, in the body of his flesh thro' death to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproueable in his sight: If ye continue in the Faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.* These several remarks shew that there are conditions, performable by Christians in the Christian Covenant throughout their whole spiritual Warfare. It follows therefore that those, who affirm the Christian Covenant to be unconditional on the part of Christians, mistake but from the beginning

beginning to the end ; are but totally ignorant of the Christian Covenant.

Having thus said enough to satisfy any reasonable person, I might omit adding to the remarks already made upon this subject ; but, as there are two passages of scripture, usually cited in favour of final perseverance, I shall here mention these ; shew their proper meaning ; and add a passage or two as a proof that the Elect, or persons in a justified state, may fall finally.

The first of these is that mention'd in the x Chap. of St John's Gospel, in these words ; *I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish ; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand* : And the next is that mention'd in the ii Chap. of St. John's first Epistle in these words ; *They went out from us, they were not of us : For if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us*.

By the first of these is meant only this ; i. e. that CHRIST's sheep, or Christians properly so call'd, cannot perish, thro' any fault of their saviour in withholding spiritual help from them ; neither can their spiritual enemies compel them to lose the benefit of their Election. If this ever be lost, it must be by choice only in those, that lose it ; none being able to hurt them while they *abide in the vine*, or keep close to CHRIST ; this answer being sufficient for both the Passages beforemention'd, or any other of like signification, that may be added to them. But the last of these carries not in it the appearance of a proof of what it is cited for ; these words, (without doubt) implying no such thing as impossibility : I say the first of these Passages before cited, or any other of like signification, must be understood in such a sense as I have given, or these, and the following will be contradictory ; whereas, taken in
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the sense I contend for, they all agree. The first
of these, which positively declare that the Elect,
or persons in a justified state, may fall finally, is
that mention'd in the vi Chap. of St. Paul's E-
pistle to the Hebrews, and in the 4, 5, and 6 verses;
which, as I have explain'd it at large in my expo-
sition of the Church Catechism, I need not repeat
in this place.

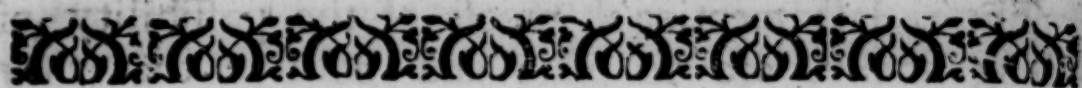
The next is contain'd in the ii Chap. of St. Pe-
ter's general Epistle in these words; *For, if after
they have escaped the pollutions of the World thro'
the knowledge of our LORD and SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST, they are again entangl'd there-
in, and overcome, the latter end is worse than
the beginning: For it had been better for them
never to have known the way of Righteousness
than, after they have known it, to turn from
the Holy Commandment delivered unto them: But
it is happened unto them according to the true
Proverb; The Dog is turned to his own vomit
again, and the sow that was washed to her wal-
lowing in the mire.*

The last, which I shall here take notice of, out
of many more, which might be added to them, is
mention'd thus in the x Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle
to the Hebrews; *For if we sin wilfully after
we have received the knowledge of the truth,
there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a
certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fie-
ry Indignation, which shall devour the Adversa-
ries. He that despised Moses's Law died with-
out mercy under two or three Witnesses: Of how
much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be
thought Worthy who hath trod under foot the
son of GOD, and hath counted the blood of the
Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy
thing, and hath done despite to the spirit of
Grace.*

These

These, last mention'd proofs of the possibility of falling finally, are so plain and positive that they need no explanation. I shall therefore, instead of making any unnecessary additions, end this discourse with observing that, if Christians will but be sincere in their endeavours, to act at all times according to the directions of the Holy spirit, they will be as secure as if there were no possibility of falling finally after Justification; this, and this alone, being the road leading to final perseverance; this, and this alone, being the means, prescribed by Our LORD and his Holy Apostles, to make our calling and Election sure; this, and this alone, being the way to render the Redemption of mankind Universal, as St. Paul affirms it was design'd to be in these words; *But we see JESUS, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crown'd with Glory and Honour; that He by the Grace of GOD should taste death for every man.*





S E R M O N VI.

On being Righteous overmuch.

ECCLESIASTES VII. 16.

Be not Righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over-wise: Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?

TH E S E words are suppos'd by some to have been spoken by Solomon, as personating the Ungodly; and urg'd in excuse for their leaving undone those things, which the Righteous declar'd necessary to be perform'd. Others think they were design'd to discourage a too Censorious, and severe reprehension of human failings, without allowing for natural Infirmities; or the imposition of heavier burdens in the work of Religion than G O D requires; i. e. the commanding things not insisted on in Holy Scripture, and forbidding such as the Sacred Writings do not prohibit. But, as they have of late been generally understood to countenance the cold, and indifferent manner of exercising the duties of Religion, now too much in use, nay urg'd also in defence of it, I shall undertake to shew, in my further discourse upon them, that Solomon never intended any such thing by them; and this by shewing first that endeavouring to be as Righteous, and wise, as the Holy Scriptures direct, and as the Christian Church expects all its Members to be, cannot be accounted being over-much Righteous, or wise.

And

And secondly by proving that as the like behaviour in Christians of all ages is requir'd by the Holy Scriptures, so is it also by the Rules and Orders of our Church in particular; and that consequently, unless the generality of its Members resolve to be far more Righteous, and Spiritually wise, than they are at present, they cannot be call'd Christians; in regard their manner of living is directly contrary to the sacred Laws of the Gospel, as well as to the doctrine of the purest Church of any in the Christian World.

First, in order to make it appear that keeping up the form of Religion, where inward Holiness is wanting, is only deceiving those, in whom this is found, I shall shew, that endeavouring to be as Righteous, and wise, as the Holy Scriptures direct, and as the Christian Church expects all its Members to be, cannot be accounted being over-much Righteous or wise.

This, for the sake of order and regularity, I shall set forth, by producing passages of scripture to shew, what the general behaviour of Christians ought to be; and then prove that those first converted to Christianity, as well as all sincere Christians since their time, understood them in the manner I explain them; and that, not only by declaring by their Writings that they did, and do so, but by letting their actions confirm it.

The first thing, respecting the general Religious behaviour of Christians, is that solemn acknowledgment of the mercies, and blessings extended to them by the Authour of their being, and well being, which consists in Publick Worship; and in the behaviour requir'd therein.

That the sacred scriptures prescribe both in the directions, given concerning the latter, (the former being included therein,) appears from these words, recorded in the v. Chap. of the book of Ecclesiastes;

after; *Keep thy Foot when thou goest into the house of GOD:* and in these mention'd in the Psalm; *And in thy fear will I worship toward thy Holy Temple.*

By both these Passages is to be understood a necessity for Publick Worship, as well as the most reverential behaviour therein. I cite these only, because it cannot be necessary to add more in this place, as the thing, intended to be prov'd, is generally acknowledg'd, and as every one is at liberty, whose inclination leads him to a more general inspection of the proof of this Doctrine, to view them at pleasure: And that those, who first embrac'd the Christian Faith, as well as others taught by them for many generations, believed themselves oblig'd, not only to assemble together to worship GOD publickly, but to discover their awful regard for the Deity they appear'd before, will be sufficiently manifest, from the advice given by them concerning both; and also from their behaviour upon such occasions.

With regard to attendance upon Publick Worship I find it remark'd, that these were so very careful in this respect, that all, who could possibly do so, met upon the Lord's day to join therein; at which times such Crowds of People came together that they were innumerable: Nay so much was the discharge of this duty insisted on by the Church in those ages, that 'twas not only expected to have it so, but a thing usual for none to be absent without real necessity: For so inexcusable was an omission of this kind then accounted, that those in Cities, who absented themselves three Lord's day's together, were to be punish'd with suspension from the communion; a thing very grievous to them at that time. But this attendance, upon Lord's days, these Pious Christians were far from supposing sufficient to excuse their absence at other

other times: For, at Constantinople in particular, their zeal for GOD led them to this commendable and delightful work at other times also; these being unable to think of permitting the commonness of Religious discourses to render them unworthy of their Notice; which discourses I find also were such as I have lately made use of; i. e. expositions of sacred scripture. To these resorted vast Numbers of both sexes, of all sorts, and Ranks of persons, rich and poor, honourable and ignoble, learned and simple, Governours and People, Soldiers and Tradesmen; All these leaving their temporal affairs for the sake of hearing sermons; as the pious Dr. Cave observes from the Authority of the Bishops of those times. The same Authour assures us that this was also their usual practice at Antioch; where they had sermons every day for a good part of the year. Upon their Fasting days likewise these join'd in Publick Worship, which were every Wednesday and Friday, those at the season of the Year known by the name of Lent; and at the times of the Commemoration of their Martyrs.

As these thought themselves oblig'd thus to assemble, for the sake of joining in Publick Worship, so were they no less careful of their behaviour, when there: For we are inform'd by the Authour abovemention'd, that they shew'd the greatest regard for GOD upon these occasions; looking upon these places of Publick Worship as such, where GOD was more peculiarly present. At their entrance therefore their behaviour was of the most grave, and submissive kind. Nothing Vain, or trifling, could be observ'd, either in look, or action, among them; these carrying themselves during the whole time of their continuance therein, unless when their voices were to be heard, with the most profound silence and Devotion. At these

times they also celebrated the Lord's supper; which for a considerable time they did every day; and, after the daily reception of it ceas'd, they long continu'd the use of it every Lords day. Nay so particularly did they think themselves oblig'd to the performance of the duties of Publick Worship, and Celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist, that in times of persecution, when they durst not, or were not permitted to assemble for this purpose by day, and in their Churches, they came together in rooms, made under ground for the Interment of their Martyrs, and did it by night: so zealous were these in doing, and well doing, these most necessary of all Religious duties.

The next Religious service, which I shall here take notice of, is the observation of the Lord's day. This as I have already prov'd the necessity, as well as shewn the manner of observing it in my Exposition of the Church Catechism, I need not here repeat. 'Tis therefore sufficient to observe at this time, that the Primitive Christians view'd this Religious service in the light I have there plac'd it; this in particular, I mean the LORD's day, which is the Christian Sabbath, having been as religiously observ'd among them as was the Sabbath among the Jews. For these thought it not sufficient to join in Publick Worship, and the commemoration of our LORD's death in that sacrament which was design'd to keep it in memory, (and which they never omitted, as has been already observ'd,) but spent the remaining part of it in reading, praying to, praising, and meditating on the wonderful word, and works of GOD. And so long did this valuable custom continue in the early ages of the church, that we find this remark made of it in the time of Constantine the Great; which was in the beginning of the fourth century. "That Pious Prince, says Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, was no sooner come over to
" the

“ the Church than he commanded the LORD’s
 “ Day, which was his principal care to have pro-
 “ perly observ’d, to be a day of rest to all per-
 “ sons whatsoever; that men might have nothing
 “ to do but worship G O D, be better instructed
 “ in the christian Faith, and spend their whole
 “ time without any thing to hinder them in pray-
 “ er and Devotion. ” This shews that the Christian
 Church prescrib’d to all it’s Members what Con-
 stantine insisted on the performance of, or he would
 not have known, nor acknowledg’d it to have
 been the practice of the Church, or proper to be
 observ’d, at that time.

Having thus describ’d what G O D requires of all
 Christians, with regard to publick Worship, and
 the observation of the LORD’s day, and how
 those of the first, and purest ages of the Church,
 understood, and practis’d both, I now come to de-
 scribe the Private Religious behaviour, requir’d of
 all such; and how these first Christians proceeded
 in this respect.

Says our LORD to his Disciples, and in them
 to the whole Christian Church, in the xxxi Chap.
 of St. Matthew’s Gospel; *Watch and pray that
 ye enter not into temptation.* Says St. Paul, in
 the xii Chap of his Epistle to the Romans; *con-
 tinue instant in prayer:* and to the Ephesians, in
 the vi Chap. of his Epistle to them; *praying al-
 ways with all prayer and supplication in the
 spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseve-
 rance.* Says the same Apostle also concerning the
 scriptures, in the same Chap. of the same Epistle;
*Take the Helmet of Salvation, and the sword of
 the spirit which is the word of G O D:* and a-
 gain, in the iii Chap. of his II Epistle to Timo-
 thy; *Continue thou in the things which thou hast
 learned, and hast been assur’d of, knowing of
 whom thou hast learned them; And that from a
 Child*

Child thou hast known the Holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, thro' Faith which is in CHRIST JESUS: Says the same Apostle also, in the v Chap. of his Epistle to the Ephesians: *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and be filled with the spirit, speaking to yourselves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual songs:* and again in these, mention'd in the iii Chap. of his Epistle to the Colossians, *Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs:* And says St. James in the v Chap. of his general Epistle; *Is any merry, let him sing Psalms?* These several Passages of sacred scripture, which regard the private duty of Christians, insisting on a constant Holy conversation, joyn'd with prayer and often reading the word of GOD, I shall shew you, by their behaviour in these respects, how Christians of the early ages of the Church understood.

These were so sensible of the prevalence of fervent prayer; as well as the infirmity of Humane Nature, unable to do any thing of itself, that application to GOD, in private prayer, they were remarkable for; the master of each Family observing this duty three times every day, those of his house being present with him. But besides these, 'twas usual with them to spend what time they could spare for the exercise of Religious acts in private, that of prayer taking up a considerable part of it.

As careful also were these of making themselves *mighty in the scriptures*; having the greatest value and esteem, joyn'd with the utmost reverence for the Word of GOD. This was the book which these chiefly exercis'd themselves in the

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dy of; thinking they could never sufficiently understand, nor be ready enough in it: Nay some, by frequent perusal of it, were capable of repeating whole Chapters, as tho' they had the book before them, and were reading in it. And tho' they were so desirous of that knowledge which the Divine Word convey'd to them, yet were they as willing to be instrumental in extending the same to others also: For they usually explain'd the Holy scriptures to their Families, or to any desirous of being instructed therein.

And so great, and good effects, had the Religious spending of their time thus upon them, consisting in reading, and meditating on the word of GOD, and Prayer, joyn'd with the instructions, and exhortations, receiv'd in Publick, that those of these times took so much pleasure in the duties of Religion, that they us'd them as Recreations. This appears from their delighting so much in the Singing of Psalms and Holy Hymns; which not only caus'd them to dislike the Society, and Conversation of the vain of the world, and the prophane, and indecent Songs, then us'd by the Heathens among whom they liv'd, but cautiously to avoid every one that indulg'd himself in the Poms and Vanities of the world: Nay so pleasing had constant use render'd Holy reflections, that I find it remark'd of them in these words; "you could not go into the field, but you might hear the Plowman at his Hallelujas, the Mower at his Hymns, and the Vine-dresser singing David's Psalms." Neither did these think any thing too much which tended to render them agreeable to GOD: For we find it usual with them to rise at Midnight to their devotions; these most of all detesting the thought of being Christians in name only; and which the following words were a sufficient proof of, mention'd in answer to some objections made against them at that time; "such
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" as

“as are our desires, such are our discourses; such as
 “are our discourses, such are our actions; such as
 “are our actions, such is our life.” So that, when
 all these things are put together, and consider’d, it
 will be plain, that there was neither leisure nor in-
 clination, in these, who were truly Christians, for
 vain and idle Conversation, or for ungodly, and sin-
 ful sports, and meetings. Neither could they be
 persuaded to think, that the word of GOD per-
 mitted them to indulge themselves in any such thing:
 For these look’d upon it as their duty, not only to
 believe as they ought, but to shew their profession
 by their lives; thereby discovering that they rightly
 understood these words of St. James, mention’d in
 the ii Chap. of his general Epistle; *I will shew
 thee my Faith by my Works.*

Having thus shewn what I intended in my first
 Proposition, I now proceed to prove that as the like
 behaviour in Christians of all Ages is requir’d by
 the Holy Scriptures, so the rules and orders of our
 Church in particular discover, that she expects the
 same of all its members; and that consequently, un-
 less the generality of these resolve to be far more
 righteous, and wise, than they have long been, and
 are at present, they cannot be call’d Christians; in
 regard their manner of living is directly contrary
 to the sacred laws of the Gospel, and the doctrine
 of the purest Church of any in the Christian world.

What the Holy Scriptures require of all, that
 are called after the name of CHRIST, I have
 already shewn; these being intended as a Rule to
 direct all in all Ages of the World. Consequently
 every thing, already observ’d concerning these, is
 as applicable to us of the present, and to all in all
 future ages, as it could be to those beforementio-
 n’d: For tho’ many put off the observation of a
 strict exercise of Religion, when the example of
 the Primitive Christians is urg’d in favour of it
 pretending

pretending that so much, as was then practis'd, is not now requir'd, in regard the danger of losing their lives, (which these were in daily and hourly expectation of,) is now no more; Yet far will this reason appear, upon examination, to be from amounting to an excuse in this case; nay, so very far from this, that it is unfit to proceed out of a Christians mouth: For tho' we are not now (Blessed be GOD for this great act of Goodness to us) in immediate danger of being cut off by persecution, yet are we in the hands of the same GOD; and of one, who expects as grateful a behaviour from us, and for the same reasons, as he did from them. The Uncertainty of Humane life, when we call to mind how many are call'd out of the world by sudden and unexpected Accidents, how many by dropping down dead instantly, and how many with very little tho' somewhat more warning, and how many so visited near the end of life as to be unable, thro' excess of pain, and want of reason, to set themselves in order to appear before a Righteous Judge: May not, I say, the uncertainty of Humane life, joyn'd with the possibility of passing out of it in the manner beforemention'd, be an argument to move Christians of the present, and all future ages, to far greater spiritual diligence than can now be observ'd in them, if not to as great as appear'd in those of ages past? But if not, let these add to it the danger they are in thro' the temptations of their three spiritual Enemies; the strength of which their being held in such strong fetters of various sins too plainly shew; and which our LORD and his Apostles advise, and charge all Christians alike in all ages of the world to admit, as motives to so valuable a purpose, and they'll soon perceive that such a life, as the Primitive Christians led, is the life which they themselves should lead: For the word Primitive, which the

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Christians

Christians of the first ages of the Church are now generally known by, was intended only to signify the time they liv'd in; that making no alteration in the duties of the Christian Religion; every Christian being oblig'd to the same Faith, and practice, throughout every age as long as the world endures. However, whether those, who differ in opinion from me in this matter, will be prevail'd with to think more for their own Interest, or not, this is the doctrine of our Church, and which I prove to be so in the following manner.

That frequent publick worship is insisted on by our Church, even twice or oftner every day, appears from the book of Common prayer; this having the book of Psalms so divided, as to be read thro' once every month in certain parts, or Portions, at morning and evening; a service of prayers for each time of the day; and lessons also, out of the old, and new Testament, order'd to be read at our morning and evening Devotion. A further proof of this is the daily use of prayers, oftner than twice a day, in Collegiate Churches; and the additional services in the book of Common Prayer for such Festival, and Fast days, as are appointed by it to be more particularly regarded; of which every Friday in the Year is to be observ'd as a day of Fasting, over and above the Eves of the Festival days, and the time which Lent consists of.

What sort of behaviour our Church requires of all its Members in publick Worship appears from the Statutes and directions, enacted, and given concerning it: For, exclusive of the Statutes, made by the Authority of Parliament, commanding an orderly, sober, and reverent behaviour in all, that resort to it, and prescribing punishments in case of disobedience, we find a Canon, made on purpose to prevent indecent behaviour at such times; and discourses also, among those in the book of Homilies

lies, which describe the necessity of Publick Worship, and the behaviour of those concern'd therein. so that, upon viewing the care of our Church in its Statutes, Rulrick, Canons, and Homilies, ye will find it enjoins, not only a frequent attendance upon publick Worship, but the most reverent and humble behaviour, consisting in such a grave and serious carriage during the whole service as the Primitive Christians practis'd, as well as that attention, by enjoining a careful observation of the different Postures of body requir'd by it, which these were remarkable for; and whose example was the director of those, concern'd in prescribing the rules, and orders belonging to it.

That our Church equally insists on a proper observance of the LORD's day appears from the punishments, appointed for such as, either prophane, or omit joyning in Publick Worship upon it, as well as from ordering the keeping of it Holy; i. e. applying the time remaining after Publick Worship, to private Religious exercises; such as reading and meditating on GOD's holy word; praying to, and praising him for his repeated acts of goodness to mankind; instructing those, that belong to the houses of all concern'd in these private duties, in the principles of Religion; and in works of Charity, where those are wanting; And that the LORD's day is to be thus spent we learn from the great Bishop Stillingfleet, in his Rights, and duties of the Parochial Clergy; and also from the Pious Authour of the Treatise of the Festivals and Fasts of our Church, Mr. Nelson.

That our Church prescribes a frequent reception of the LORD's Supper will appear from the liberty, afforded therein, of repeating this good work oft as its members please; and from the exhortation in the Communion Service, appointed to be read where it has not been duly observ'd: For tho'

Ministers are not compell'd to administer it oftner than three times an Year, and the Layety not punishable, if they receive it once an Year, yet no prohibition can be found to hinder, either Minister, or Layety, from a frequent use of it. So far from this, that the practise of some Ministers and their Congregations, joyning in this Service Monthly, and which, if I am rightly inform'd, is observ'd in our Metropolis every LORD's day, is a manifest proof, that I am not mistaken concerning the Intention of our Church in this matter.

And as our Church has follow'd the example of the Primitive Church in prescribing, and enjoyning Publick Worship, to all its Members, a due observation of the LORD's day, a frequent commemoration of our LORD's Death and Passion, and a proper behaviour upon these sacred occasions, so does it no less recommend, and set forth the necessity of Private Religious duties: For, in the Homily of Prayer, we are taught that nothing can be had from GOD without this; which was intended as an argument for the frequent use of it; and Christians are also therein press'd with all possible earnestness, to look upon this as the key to unlock the door of mercy. Private Prayer is also describ'd in this discourse to consist of two sorts; one, wherein the Mind only is concern'd; and the other where the Voice is to be us'd; that of the first sort the Members of our Church being advis'd herein to be often sending up to GOD every day; and that of the other being declar'd also as necessary in its proper place to be daily us'd.

The reading of Holy Scriptures also is prescrib'd, as a necessary daily employment, in these Homilies; in one place whereof we find these words concerning this duty; "O that all men would
" studiously read and search the scriptures. " In another these; " There is nothing tends more to
" the

" the keeping up of Innocency, pureness of hearts
 " and an outward Godly life and conversation, than
 " a continual use of reading and diligent searching
 " of the Holy Scripture; and nothing tends more
 " to bring on blindness of mind, and all kinds of
 " vice, than the neglect of so doing " In order
 therefore to reap proper benefit from this duty, all
 its members are advis'd to add daily prayer for a-
 bility to understand its meaning: For says this
 Homily, " Whosoever desires to know the Holy
 " Scriptures GOD will send him some pious In-
 " structor to teach him, as he did Philip to in-
 " struct the Eunuch; and favour also all such with
 " the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost; which will
 " open their understandings, and shew them the
 " wonderful things of G O D's Law: " Nay at the
 end of this Homily we find this advice; " let us
 " night and day muse, meditate, and contemplate
 " upon them. Let us pray to GOD (the only
 " Authour of these heavenly studies) that we may
 " speak, think, believe, live, and depart hence, ac-
 " cording to the wholesome doctrine and verities
 " of them; which will be attended with G O D's
 " favour, Grace and defence here, and his eternal
 " glory hereafter. "

And that our Church likewise expects all its
 Members to avoid evil Company, as well as to
 exercise themselves after the manner before directed,
 is plain from the ecclesiastical censures of the vici-
 ous and irreclaimable; even to the cutting off of its
 evil Members from the society of the faithful by
 excommunication.

These several duties perform'd in the manner
 our Church prescribes, I would feign know, whe-
 ther its members are excusable in spending so much
 time, as the generality of them take up in vain
 conversation, in Gaming and diversions, in sports
 and sinful recreations? Or whether G O D expects
 not

not that all such should make his Law their pleasure and delight? Sure I am the Holy scriptures say they must. I have prov'd also that the Primitive Christians thought so. And I have made it plainly appear, that our Church expects all its members to discover by their actions that they believe so.

If then these things cannot be contradicted what has any member of this Church to do but to ask himself the following questions? i. e. whether it has been his constant practice to take all opportunities of worshiping G O D publickly, and privately? Whether, upon his entrance into his Holy Sanctuary, and during his whole continuance there, he has behav'd in as humble and reverential manner as he is requir'd? Whether he has spent the L O R D's day as religiously as he ought; i. e. by abstaining upon it, not only from the works of his employment, as well as from all temporal concerns whatsoever, but from so much as speaking or thinking about them, otherwise than in cases of real necessity? Whether he has regularly attended the L O R D's Table, by never omitting to be present at that commemoration of his L O R D's death, but with just cause for such absence? Whether he has been as diligent in the daily use of private prayer, reading, and meditating on the Holy Scriptures, as well as instructing those, committed to his Charge, in the duties of the Religion he professes, as my description of them herein amounts to? Whether he has cautiously avoided all ungodly and irreligious society after he found those, it consisted of, deaf to Holy admonition? Whether he has shewn his dislike of that common practice of the world; I mean the banishing of Religious subjects out of Conversation, and introducing vain and idle, if not more sinful discourse, in the room of it? or, upon disregard of his

his directions, whether he has afterwards refus'd such society? Whether he has so season'd his mind, with the favoury precepts of GOD's Word, as to render it proof against all filthy Songs and discourse; and brought it to delight rather in the melodious sounds of GOD's praises, and in singing to his Glory? And whether he has preferr'd the society of the good and vertuous, and opportunities of refreshing his soul with publick, and private Religious exercises, before that of the rich and great, the Pumps and Vanities, and the vain and trifling Amusements of a profane World.

This is the way for every member of our Church to know, whether he has acted as his Saviour and his Holy Mother advise, and direct: For, if, upon looking within, he finds himself deficient in the respects beforemention'd, and has not resolv'd to alter his conduct, he cannot be said to have any right to the Title of a Christian.

If this then be the case, as, if the word of GOD be true, it is, and the Actions of the generality of Christians discover that they have, not only long neglected what the Holy Scriptures, and their own Church require of them, but continue therein, the consequence whereof, if they were call'd out of the world, no better prepar'd for such a call than what they have hitherto done amounts to, must be eternal Condemnation: I say, if no other than eternal misery can be the fate of such as these, what can they have else to do but instantly to alter their unjustifiable Conduct? But, in order to this, to resolve upon flying for help to their Saviour by Faith and Repentance, while the gate of mercy remains open? But to resolve also, upon receiving power from above to do so, to double their diligence for the future, that they may not be plac'd *with the Goats on the left hand*? But to permit
nothing

nothing to prevent a grateful return for their acceptance among them *that are Sanctified*? And this they may the more readily comply with, because, as the Holy Scriptures, and the Church, which they profess themselves Members of, insist on full as much as this, or as I have herein set forth the necessity of, there can be no danger of their being thereby led into any extream; nothing of this sort being forbidden in these words of Solomon; *Be not Righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over-wise: Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?*





S E R M O N VII.

On the Glorious State of the
Christian Church.

REVELATION XX. 6.

Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection: On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of GOD and of CHRIST, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

AS a misapprehension of St. John's meaning, concerning the glorious state of the Christian Church in this world, has led many into great mistakes, As these have been so transmitted from age to age as to reach this, in which we now live, And as giving the true sense of the Prophecies, concerning this matter, is going the nearest way to work towards rectifying these mistakes, this tending as effectually to set aside all wrong notions as if they were particularly enumerated, and confuted, I purpose working by this rule, in my attempts towards putting an end to this Controversy. But, as my supposition will be best apprehended if set forth without the Interruption of the proofs, necessary to be added in support of it, I shall first describe the glorious state of the Christian Church, according to the Revelation of the

Prophecies concerning it, and then shew upon what foundation this supposition is built.

The state of the Christian Church is the state the Christian world is at present and hath been long in. And that it will never fail appears from these our LORD's words; *The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* This gracious promise hath been wonderfully made good to the members of it in all ages ever since its first Erection: For in its greatest Adversity, i. e. the times of persecution, hath such strength, and power, been conferr'd upon its holy martyrs, as to enable them cheerfully to sustain their fiery tryals; Nay so amazingly did its Celestial preserver act in favour of it, in the increase of its members also, notwithstanding the Cruelty us'd to discourage the profession of the Christian doctrine, as to have it thus remark'd concerning it; the Blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church. Thus powerfully protected, will this goodly Building remain unshaken, tho' the waves, and storms of persecution, beat ever so violently against it, till its glory is so increas'd as to have all Nations flow unto it. From that time, which is the beginning of its glorious state upon Earth, and which may justly be so term'd from the glorious things said of it by the Prophets, will it continue for many ages in uninterrupted peace and Prosperity; be free from the temptations of that subtil enemy, by whose wiles and stratagems it has hitherto suffer'd so grievously, and will yet longer; and enjoy such wonderful Divine assistance as not only to become as holy, but to remain long in as great holiness and purity, as in the first ages of it. But, before these joyous days, many great, and wonderful events, must succeed each other, in order to render it so. For all the Antichristian Party must be overpower'd; and in particular the great Antichrist, the Church

(Serm. VII.) CHURCH of ENGLAND III

Church of Rome. GOD's beloved People, the Jews, will not only be converted to Christianity, and seated in their own Country, but be wonderfully protected there by Omnipotent Power. Thus converted, will these be earnestly engag'd in endeavouring to convert the rest of the world, whose endeavours will be attended with so great success that the world, thro' their means, will be universally brought to the knowledge of the truth. Then will commence the glorious state of the Christian Church; which will continue in temporal felicity for a great length of time, if not a Thousand years; after which Satan will be again loosed for a short time, and permitted to deceive the Nations till the general Judgment.

The first of these great Events, preparatory to this glorious state of the Church, will be the fall of the great Antichrist, the Church of Rome. By the word Antichrist is meant an adversary to CHRIST; or one, that pretends to act in favour of, but is found opposing CHRIST by setting up his own doctrine instead of that of CHRIST. This title suits also all that oppose the true Religion, or set up notions of their own inventing, instead of it; and therefore all such are stil'd the Antichristian Party. But, as one in particular would more properly deserve this Title than any of the other, this we find particularly describ'd by St. John, in his book of Revelation; in which he affords proper marks where to find as well as to know him by. This Antichrist, tho' he is describ'd in the singular Number, as tho' he were some particular man, we must take notice in this place, is to be understood as a body of men under one supreme head; i. e. the Church of Rome with the Pope at the head of it; the marks given to know Antichrist by agreeing exactly with that Church under the Government now belonging

longing to it, and to no other single man, or body of men, in the world.

St Paul, in the second Chapter of his second Epistle to the Theſſalonians, favours us with ſome marks to know him by, in answer to thoſe of that Church, whom deceivers would have perſwaded that the day of Judgment was near at hand: For he tells them that, before that time, Antichriſt would appear in the world, in theſe words; *Let no man deceive you by any means: For that day ſhall not come, except there come a falling away firſt and that man of ſin be revealed the ſon of Perdition: who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called G O D, or that is worſhipped: ſo that he, as G O D, ſitteth in the Temple of G O D, ſhewing himſelf that he is G O D. Even him whoſe coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders.* That the deſcription of Antichriſt is applicable to the Church of Rome, with the Pope at the head of it, will appear from what may be ſaid of that Church: For the Pope of Rome is known to exalt himſelf above Emperours, and Kings, and all other Civil, and Eccleſiaſtical Governours of the Chriſtian Church. He alſo perverteth G O D's holy word, and Laws; and oppoſeth all, that profeſs the true Chriſtian Faith; declaring himſelf infallible; nay capable of pardoning the ſins of thoſe, whom he thinks fit ſo to indulge, which is the property of G O D only; and therefore he is juſtly ſtil'd *the Man of ſin*; this preſumption, join'd with the other impious doctrines of that Church, being a manifeſt proof that it may well be diſtinguiſh'd by this Title: that of *the Son of Perdition* being as applicable to it alſo, as will plainly appear from what the ſacred Writings ſay concerning it: And that the proceedings of that Church are properly deſcrib'd

by the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, is plain from the pretended Miracles, and wonderful works, said to be wrought by the Members of that Church; their Legends being, not only full of these, but containing such ridiculous assertions, as cannot but excite the detestation of, instead of gaining credit with every man of Common sense.

But St. John, in his book of Revelation, favours us with so many marks where to find, as well as to know Antichrist by, all which agree so well with the Church of Rome, that it plainly appears, from comparing this Church with his description of both, that no other can be meant by them. The principal of these marks, (all of them being too tedious to introduce in this place,) I shall now lay before you as well as the application of them, that every man may Judge for himself.

In the xiii Chap. of the book of Revelation we find the Roman Empire represented by a Beast, having seven heads, ten horns, and upon its head the name of Blasphemy. This Beast is said to have had a body like a Leopard, feet like a Bear, a Mouth like a Lyon, and that the Dragon had given power to it. One of the seven heads of this Beast is said to have been wounded to death, but that it had its deadly wound healed, and that all the world wonder'd at, and worshipped it. Now that the Roman Empire only, the seat of the great Antichrist, is meant by this Beast, which it is thus describ'd by, will appear from what is revealed in the xvii Chap. and the remarks which may be added to it concerning that Empire: For in that Chapter it is said, that the seven heads of the Beast beforemention'd are seven Mountains, on which the City is built; it being certain that Rome was built upon seven hills, the
Names

Names of all which are particularly mention'd by Heathen Writers. A further proof of this are these additional words; *And there are seven Kings*; our learned Pool observing, that Rome has been under seven different Governments. First, according to his account of this matter, it was Govern'd by Kings; next by Consuls; then by Tribunes; after that by Decemvirs; these being succeeded by Dictators; those by Pagan Emperours; in whose place came Christian Emperours. The addition of these words in the same Chapter, *that was, is not, and yet is*, concerning one of the heads of the Beast, which was near being wounded to death, and had its deadly wound healed, is yet a further proof of the same thing: For the Idolatrous worship which was us'd in the time of the Pagan Emperours, and which ceas'd when these were succeeded by Christian, is again renew'd, and continu'd in the Church of Rome in the worship of Images to this day. The same also is evident from these words in the Chapter beforemention'd; *Five of the seven Kings are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space: And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eight, and is of the seven, and goeth into Perdition*: For it seems hereby revealed that, when St. John writ his book of Revelation, Rome was under the Government of Pagan Emperours, the five different Governments, beforemention'd, having long before ceas'd; and that by the next King, which he says was to come, and to continue a short space, he would have us understand the Government of Christian Emperours; which would be of short continuance, because there would be an alteration in the Roman Empire by its becoming Elective, instead of continuing hereditary; at which time great part of the power, belonging to the Empire, would be seiz'd by the Pope,

(Serm. VII.) CHURCH of ENGLAND. 115

Pope, here call'd the eighth King, and part of the seven: For tho' he artfully thrust himself into the power, properly belonging to the Roman Emperours, yet he left the Emperours the name, and therefore he is here call'd an eighth King, as being a different person, enjoying the power of the Roman Empire tho' the Emperour still continu'd in appearance to possess it, i. e. to be the seventh King. But, notwithstanding all his artful Management, it is here revealed, that this Usurper would lose all the power, which he so unjustly wrested out of the hands of those, to whom it of Right belong'd.

Another mark to know where to find, as well as to know Antichrist by, is afforded in the ten horns which the Beast is said to have upon its head. These ten horns are explain'd in the xvii Chap. in these words; *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten Kings, which have receiv'd no Kingdom as yet; but receive power as Kings one hour with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire: For GOD hath put in their hearts to fulfil His Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of GOD shall be fulfilled.* This Prophecy seems plainly to point out to us the Electoral Princes of Germany, intended by Divine Providence as Instruments to disappoint the artful Contrivance of Antichrist; and that by so over-ruling humane wisdom as to cause these to destroy what they were invested with power to support; these being the hands that seem design'd to pull down that *Man of*

116 *A further* DEFENCE *of the* (Serm. VII.)
of sin. But, as this supposition ought to be well
supported, before it can be expected to be acknow-
ledg'd as a part of the Christian Doctrine, it will
be necessary to compare what is said concerning the
ten Kings in Holy Scripture, with what may be
observ'd concerning the Electoral Princes.

Says our Learned Heylin, in his Cosmography P.
89, concerning the changing the way of admission
to the Roman Empire by making it Elective; "Gre-
" gory the fifth (the then Pope) finding the pow-
" er of the Emperour, as long as it continu'd in a
" way of succession, not likely to be overborn by
" that of the Church, and being withal incens'd a-
" gainst the Romans, who till that time retained
" some shadow of an Empire, projected the Election
" of the future Emperours by the Princes of Ger-
" many; by which the Germans were distracted in-
" to Factions, and the Romans weakned, and so a
" door left open to the Popes of Rome to make
" their ends of them both." In order to this an
Agreement was made and confirm'd by those in
power in the Roman Empire, (the particulars of
which are contain'd in the Golden Bull,) that the
Empire for the future should become Elective; and
that the person, advanc'd thereto, should obtain it
by majority of Voices; seven Princes of Germany
being invested with Authority to act, as Electors,
upon that occasion; power also being given to any
Emperour, so Elected to add to the number of E-
lectors; which power has been since us'd for that
purpose, the number at present (if I mistake not)
being nine. So that, either the addition of one more,
or accounting the Emperour, or a King of the Ro-
mans elect, another, makes up the number ten, ac-
cording to the Prophecy. And that these have Re-
gal power in their several Electorates will appear
from what may be observ'd concerning them, as
well as from the following remark of the Emperour
Maximilian

Maximilian in these words, mention'd by Martin Luther in his *Mensalia Colloquia*; "He (said that Emperour) was a King of Kings, (i. e. as he was head of the Electoral Princes:) For what he imposed upon these Princes, if therewith they were pleased, then they accomplished his Will; otherwise they let it alone, thereby shewing that the Princes never were in obedient subjection under the Emperours, but did what they pleased."

The vii Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Daniel, which describes the fourth Monarchy, or Roman Empire, seems to confirm my supposition, that no other are meant by the ten horns of the Beast, or the ten Kings signified by them, than the Electoral Princes: For in that Chapter are these words; *I consider'd the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns pluckt up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth, that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows: I beheld, and the same horn made war with the Saints, and prevailed against them; Until the ancient of days came, and Judgment was given to the saints of the most high: And the time came that the saints possessed the Kingdom: i. e. the Pope, or the great Antichrist, represented by the little horn coming up among the ten horns, hath his residence in the Roman Empire among the Electoral Princes; who was little at first, as he is represented to be by the little horn, but was full of subtilty; which furnish'd him*

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with

with various arts and contrivances to support the Popedom, represented by the horn's being full of eyes like those of a man; and who soon arriv'd at so great encrease of power as to Thunder against Emperours and Kings; and to make his word stand for a Law in the nations deceived by him, represented by the little horn's speaking very great things, and having a look more stout than his fellows; by St. John also in these words, in the xiii Chap. of his book of Revelation; *And he had two horns like a Lamb, and spake as a Dragon*; and who has been remarkable for many ages, and is still, for persecuting those that profess the true Christian Faith; which cruelty he will doubtless continue till a stop is put to his Tyranny by the loss of that power, which he has so long so unmercifully exercis'd, represented by his making war with the saints, and prevailing against them, till the Ancient of days came, and Judgment was given to the Saints of the most High, and the time came that the Saints possessed the Kingdom. It is further foretold also in this Prophecy, that this *man of sin* should have the Mortification of seeing three of those Kings, which would be of his party, desert and forsake him before his fall; i. e. by renouncing his errors and false doctrine, represented by three of the horns being pluck'd up by the roots before him: By which may be meant, that those three Archiepiscopal Electors, which he most depended on, by professing the true faith before his fall, would leave and desert the Church of Rome; but, upon considering what Luther says of the Electors of Saxony, the Palatinate, and Brandenburg, in his comment upon the Epistle to the Galatians, I rather think this Prophecy is already fulfill'd; i. e. in their desertion of the Pa-

pacy, at the time of the Reformation in Germany in the year 1530.

St. John's Prophecy concerning the ten King's says, that they receiv'd power one hour with the Beast; i. e. these would arise at some particular time during the usurpation of the Pope; and that they had receiv'd no Kingdom as yet; i. e. when he committed this Prophecy to Writing; which I have already shewn that the Electoral Princes had not, as well as when they came into Power. It says also that the ten Kings have one mind, and would give their power and strength to the Beast, and make war with the Lamb till the Lamb should overcome them. This may justly be said of the Electoral Princes; these being Papists at their first Creation; and continuing so, as well as persecuting those of the true faith, till CHRIST by the preaching of Luther open'd the eyes of some of them; It says likewise that the ten King's shall hate the whore, make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire: i. e. When the eyes of all the Electoral Princes shall be open'd, so as to perceive the necessity of admitting the Protestant Faith, they shall detest the errors of the Church of Rome; deprive her of the Power, and riches, which she has so long enjoy'd; and root out of the Christian Church the abominable Idolatry, or spiritual fornication of the Popish Church.

St. John's Prophecy in the xiii Chap. of his book of Revelation tells us, that the Beast had upon its head the name of Blasphemy; which exactly agrees with the behaviour of this *Man of sin*, who pretends to be infallible, and to forgive sins; this being no less than Blasphemy. It says also that the Body of the Beast was like that of a Leopard, the feet those of a Bear, the Mouth

that of a Lyon, and that the Dragon had given power to Him. Hereby he seems to foretell, not only that the Roman Empire would have diversity of Governments, but that the Church of Rome would have false doctrines intermix'd with the true, represented by the spotted body of the Leopard; that it would exercise the most savage Cruelty towards those that refus'd to admit those false doctrines, represented by the feet of a Bear, that it would discover most presumptuous boldness in daring to defy Heaven, by preferring, and enjoyn- ing Obedience to the Commandments of Men before those of GOD, represented by the mouth of that undaunted Animal the Lyon; and that the Devil would, not only encourage, but assist it in contriving how to be vexatious, and afflicting to the true servants of CHRIST, represented by the Dragon's giving power to the Beast.

St. John also further describes the great Antichrist in these words, mention'd in the xvii Chap. of his book of Revelation; *Come hither, and I will shew thee the Judgment of the great Whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the Kings of the Earth have committed fornication, and the Inhabiters of the Earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me in the spirit into the Wilderness: And I saw a Woman sit upon a scarlet colour'd Beast, full of names of Blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the Woman was array'd in purple, and scarlet colour, and deck'd with Gold, and precious stone and pearls, having a golden Cup in her hand, full of Abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a Name writen; Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood* of

of the saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of JESUS. That this description of Antichrist is applicable to the Church of Rome will appear, from what may be observ'd concerning it in all the respects beforemention'd: For, as old Babylon was remarkable for Idolatry and abuse of Religion, (such behaviour towards GOD being call'd fornication in various parts of the old Testament,) so the Church of Rome, that Mystery of Iniquity, may justly be stil'd Babylon the great, or the Great whore, or the Mother of Harlots, and abominations of the Earth, because she is known to exceed all other Churches, and Nations, in the abuse of GOD's holy Word, Worship, and Religious worshippers; nay for many ages to have been infamously remarkable for spiritual fornication; one of her Popes, who passed under the name of John, and whose proper name was Joan, being a Notorious Strumpet; which is literally verifying this Prophecy; and because she had deceiv'd many Kings and Nations by her false doctrines, and prevailed on such Multitudes of the Inhabitants of the Earth to profess the Faith taught by her. How the names of Blasphemy become applicable to the Church of Rome, as well as the seven heads, and ten horns, I have already shewn: and how she may be understood as residing in the Romane Empire, in that Pomp, and state, here spoken of, represented by her sitting upon a scarlet colour'd Beast, deck'd with Gold and precious stones, will appear from her great riches; and from considering how pompous are the Habits, and ornaments of the Pope, and clergy of that Church; and which our Learned Heylin describes in these words, mention'd in the 89th P. of his Cosmography; "Paul the
" second endeavour'd to encreate the Majesty of

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“ the Popedom by Arms and Avarice, and exceed-
 “ ed all his Predecessors in Pomp and shew; cau-
 “ sing his Mitre to be enrich’d with Diamonds, sa-
 “ phirs, Emeralds, and other stones of great price;
 “ and augmenting the splendour of the Cardi-
 “ nals with a scarlet gown; whom Innocent the
 “ Fourth had Grac’d with red Hats before. ”

And that the Church of Rome may well be understood from the Character of cruelty given to the Woman, said to be drunken with the blood of the Saints, and of the Martyrs of J E S U S, will appear from reflecting on the sea of blood, shed by that iniquitous Church in the persons of those, that differ’d from it in matters of Faith, in the different ages of the world: For these are said to have slain above a Million of those poor suffering Protestants, known by the names of Albigenes or Waldenses. The same also will appear from viewing the accounts given of their Massacres at Paris in France, Ireland, and other places; the bloody work long carried on, and still continu’d, in their Courts of Inquisition against such as had, or have not the mark of the Beast upon them; i. e. did, or do not profess the Popish Religion.

The last mark to know the great Antichrist by, which I shall here take notice of, is set forth in these words in the xiii Chap. of the book of Revelation; *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: For it is the number of a Man; and his number is six hundred three-score and six.* That the Church of Rome is meant in these words seems plain, from its name being contain’d in those Letters, which stand for the number six hundred three-score and six. The way of reckoning their numbers among the Greeks, in whose Language the New Testa-

ment was written, was by the Letters of their Alphabet. Now by putting the following Greek Letters separate, and the numbers they stand for among the Greeks, opposite to them, as thus, the very number before mention'd will be found exactly answering the Letters of the name of the Head of the Romane, or Latine Empire, and Church; the Emperour being a Latine, and the Pope also being a Latine.

Α	30
α	1
Τ	300
ε	5
ι	10
ν	50
ο	70
ς	200
	666

And that this Title suits the Church of Rome will further appear from considering that she orders Publick Worship to be perform'd, and the Scriptures to be read in the Latine Tongue only; preferring the Latine Translation of the Holy Scripture before the Hebrew, and Greek, which they were written in; as appears by their Complutense Edition of the Holy Scriptures, wherein the Latine Translation is plac'd between the Hebrew and the Greek, like CHRIST between two Thieves, as they presumptuously boast concerning this Translation. Thus plainly does it appear from the marks already taken notice of, (and the same will appear also from those other, which I have omitted mentioning as being too many for this place,) that the Church of Rome is the great Antichrist. And that this great Antichrist will fall, i. e. the time will come in which the errors of the Church of Rome will be perceiv'd, and she therefore no longer suffer'd to remain in the Christian world, I now come to prove.

This the Prophet Daniel plainly reveals in these words, mention'd in the vii Chap. of his Prophecy; *I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the Beast was slain, and his body destroy'd, and given to the burning flame.* The same is also as plainly reveal'd by St. John, in the xviii, and xix Chapters

Chapters of his book of Revelation. In the first of which he tells us that, notwithstanding this Church's Pride, and dependance upon the power of the Kings, and Nations, which would be of her Communion, down she would come; and that there would be an end of all her grandeur and riches, all her offices and Preferments, and all those ways and means of amassing treasure, (i. e. by Pardons, Indulgencies, Dispensations, and various other arts and contrivances) which she had long us'd to enrich herself; nothing being left to those, who shar'd with her in these temporal advantages, but bewailing the loss they would sustain by her fall: For, in order to shew how irrecoverable her ruine would be, he represents her destruction by the falling of a great stone into the sea in these moving terms; *And a mighty Angel took up a stone like a great Millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great City Babylon* (meaning the Church of Rome) *be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all:* And in the last he tells us, that he observ'd the Inhabitants of Heaven praising, and magnifying GOD, for avenging the blood of his servants by the destruction of this Iniquitous Church: and that it was to be irrecoverable appears from these words, mention'd in the 19th Chap. *And again they said Hallelujah. And her smোক rose up for ever and ever.*

But, before the ten Kings should be able thus utterly to destroy this Idolatrous Church, St. John and the Prophet Daniel seem plainly to reveal, that they would meet with considerable difficulty in accomplishing this great work: For in the vii Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Daniel are these words; *And the ten horns out of this Kingdom are ten Kings that shall arise: And another shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse*

diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three Kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the Saints of the most High, and think to change times and Laws; and they shall be given into his hand untill a time, and times, and the dividing of time; but the Judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his Dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And St. John says in the xi Chap. of his book of Revelation concerning the two witnesses in these words; And when they shall have finish'd their Testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless Pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the Street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Ægypt, where also our LORD was Crucified. And they of the People and Kindred, and Tongues, and Nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the Earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth. And after three days and an half, the Spirit of Life from GOD entred into them: And they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from Heaven, saying unto them, come up hither. And they ascended up to Heaven in a Cloud, and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour there was a great Earthquake, and the tenth part of the City fell, and in the Earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the GOD of Heaven. St. John tells us also, in this Chapter, that the Court, which is without the Temple, is given to the Gentiles, and

that, *the Holy City shall they tread under foot forty and two months*; and again in these words; *And I will give power unto my two Witnesses, and they shall Prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days cloathed in Sack cloath.* Hereby he seems to mean that the Protestant Ministry shall continue Preaching and recommending the true Christian doctrine, in the midst of difficulties, opposition, and oppression, for that great length of time here mention'd: For that the words before cited cannot be understood literally is plain, from the Nature of the thing describ'd by them, which is the continuance of Antichrist in the world, and the length of time, which his reign is generally allow'd to consist of; the days mention'd in this Chap. signifying years, both in the forty two months, and the twelve hundred and threescore days; both which, allowing thirty days to a month, amount to one and the same Number; i. e. twelve hundred and sixty years. And that it is agreeable to the language of Holy Scripture to understand these days, as years, appears from these words, mention'd in the xiv Chap. of the book of Numbers; *After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days (each day for a year) shall ye bear your Iniquities, even forty years*; and from these, mention'd in the iv Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Ezechiel; *And they shall bear the Iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.* The same Number of days we find the Church, represented by the woman in the wilderness, remaining in persecution, in the xii Chap. of the book of Revelation and the 6th verse; and also the same Number of Months, mention'd in the xiii Chap. and 5th verse; all which mean that the reign of Antichrist, and consequently the Adversity of the true Church, would

would continue twelve hundred and sixty years; which years, if we begin our reckoning from the year 606, in which the Emperour Phocas granted to Boniface the third, (the then Pope of Rome,) Authority over all other Churches, accounting them solar years, the time of the Reign of Antichrist will be almost run out, and nearer being so, if lunar years should be meant in this Prophecy. But, as when to begin our reckoning, concerning the Commencement of the Reign of Antichrist, is not plainly reveal'd in sacred scripture, time only must shew us exactly, what we may guess at pretty nearly, from considering seriously on what is plainly reveal'd concerning him: These considerations I say shew, that by the two Witnesses cannot be meant two particular persons, but a succession of true Christian Ministers, or Preachers, who would continue endeavouring to propagate the true Christian Faith, from age to age to the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years beforemention'd.

The meaning therefore of the Passages, already cited out of the Prophecy of Daniel, and the Revelation of St. John, concerning the great opposition the true Christian Church would meet with, near the end of the Reign of Antichrist, may be this. The Prophet Daniel tells us that there would arise another King after the ten Kings, who were to be concern'd as Instruments in dethroning the great Antichrist, i. e. putting an end to the power and errors of the Church of Rome, who would be diverse from the ten Kings; that he would subdue three Kings; and that he would speak great words against the most High, and think to change times and laws; and that he would continue his Conquering power for a time, and times, and the dividing of time, but then those, before oppressed by him, would overcome him: i. e. before the fall of the Church of Rome, some person would take upon him

him the Authority of Emperour, or be set up, as such, by the Antichristian Party; who by their Assistance would make head against the power of the Electoral Princes, and, by being successful for three years and an half against three of these Princes, would intend altering the laws, and constitution of the Empire, by making it again hereditary, as well as behave towards GOD, and His true servants, in a most presuming, and persecuting manner; but that those, which he before overpower'd for a while, would soon prevail against the Usurper, and all his Party.

The same thing seems equally plain from the Revelation of St. John in the words before cited: For he seems as plainly to reveal that, near the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years, the Church of Rome would use her utmost efforts to support her too long continu'd Authority; by so doing put some of the Protestant Church out of the power they were in, as well as silence for a while some of its faithful Preachers, exercising great Cruelty where she became Victorious; and that this would be within the Jurisdiction of the Romane Emperour: For so must be understood the street of the great City, call'd Sodom and Ægypt, where our LORD was crucified; he having been crucified without the City Jerusalem, and in a place which could not be call'd a City, or street of a City, but in a place within the Jurisdiction of the Romane Emperour, as our Learned Pool observes in his Comment upon this place. The Antichristian Party, thus for a while victorious, would behave towards those of the true Church with great cruelty, represented by the bodies of the two witnesses lying unburied for three days and an half; and that they would rejoyce immoderately upon the advantage gain'd over the Protestant Party, to the silencing of those Preachers, which had been long
afflicting

afflicting to them; but that this triumphing over GOD's servants would continue no longer than three years and an half: For then would the Electoral Princes have the pleasure of seeing their united power successful over the Antichristian Party; these being then seized with great fear, so as to submit to those, whom they had lately overpowered, represented by the spirit of life from GOD entering into the dead witnesses, and causing them to stand upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. The Protestant Party thus restor'd to their former stations, out of which they were lately thrust by their insulting, and cruel enemies, would appear again in their attempts to dethrone the great Antichrist, represented by a Voice from Heaven, saying, come up hither, and they ascended up to Heaven in a Cloud, which their enemies beheld; Heaven in this place being put to signify the Church. Upon this the Electoral Princes would proceed to finish their work; i. e. put an end to the Tyranny and errors of the Church of Rome; which, thro' the opposition of the Antichristian Party, would occasion the effusion of Blood, tho' not in any very great degree; the generality of the Church of Rome, stricken with fear of their Conquerours, at last submitting to them, represented by the Earthquake occasioning the fall of the tenth part of the City, and by the slaughter of seven thousand, and the affrighting of the rest, who gave glory to the GOD of Heaven.

Thus wonderfully do the Prophet Daniel and St. John agree in their Revelation of the fall of the Church of Rome, and of the Instruments, or Agents, employ'd in the bringing about this great event in favour of the true Christian Church. There is indeed in the xii Chap. of Daniel's Prophecy seemingly a larger Number of years assign'd
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to the Reign of Antichrist than those mention'd by St. John: For therein are these words; *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the Abomination that maketh desolate, set up, shall be a Thousand two hundred and ninety days*; the number of years being greater by thirty in this Prophecy than in that of St. John. But this difficulty may be got over by considering, what was design'd by the accounts of these two sacred Writers; the one, I mean St. John, intending by his Number of twelve hundred and sixty years, to describe the reign of Antichrist till his fall by the power of the ten Kings, and so far the Prophet Daniel agrees with him; the mention of the time of his Reign till that Period only being omitted in his account of this matter; and the other intending to fix the time of the total subjection of the whole Antichristian Party, or the Commencement of the glorious state of the Church: For tho' the fall of Antichrist will make way for this, yet more time will be taken up, in settling the Church so as to have all its enemies subdu'd, and to have all Nations flow unto it; which Period of time the Prophet Daniel seems to point at, and not the time of the fall of the great Antichrist, which he had before set forth by the ten Kings, and the other King arising after them; and which will further appear from what he says in the xii Chap. concerning these two different Periods of time: For he tells us therein, by way of confirmation thereof, that the Man cloathed in Linen sware by him that *liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, and times, and an half*; i. e. that what is already mention'd concerning the ten Kings, and the other King arising after them, should certainly happen. After this the same Revealer of hidden Mysteries proceeded further in his Revelation, and foretold the

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total subduing of all the Antichristian Party thirty years after. And that it may reasonably be expected, that as many years may be taken up in converting the whole world, so as to have the Christian Church enjoy perfect Tranquility, will appear from considering, that forty nine years were taken up in settling, and establishing the Jewish Church, after the publication of the Decree for its Restoration from Babylonian Captivity; as our Learned Prideaux observes in his Connexion of the old and new Testament P. 229.

Now to GOD &c.





S E R M O N VIII.

On the Glorious State of the
Christian Church.

REVELATION XX. 6.

Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection: On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of GOD and of CHRIST, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

IN a former discourse upon these words I afforded marks to know the great Antichrist by, and shew'd also that the Church of Rome meant by him, would fall. I now come to prove that the Jews will be converted to Christianity, seated in their own Country, and there miraculously protected; which will make way for a general reception of the Christian Faith.

Says the Prophet Isayah, in the xi Chapter of his Prophecy, concerning this matter in these words; *And it shall come to pass in that Day that the LORD shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his People which shall be left from Assyria, and from Ægypt, and from Pathros, and from Cusb, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the Islands of the Sea: And he shall set up an Ensign for the Nations, and shall assemble the Outcasts of Israel, and gather together*

the Outcasts of Judah from the four Corners of the Earth. And in the xxvii Chapter in these; *And it shall come to pass in that Day that ye shall be gathered one by one, and the great Trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the Outcasts in the land of Ægypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy Mount at Jerusalem.* The same also is as plainly expressed in the xxxi Chapter of the Prophecy of the Prophet Jeremiah, from verse the 31 to verse the 35, and from verse the 38 to the end of the Chapter. The prophet Ezechiel is as positive concerning the Call of the Jews in the xxxvii Chapter of his Prophecy, from verse the 21st to the end of the Chapter, as are various other parts of Sacred Scripture, too tedious to cite at this time; By which Prophecies we may well understand that the Jews, whose Tribes, thro' disagreement, and opposition, were formerly divided into two Kingdoms, call'd Judah and Israel, shall be brought back out of all the Nations, where they shall be found sojourning, when this mercy is vouchsafed; be permitted to dwell in their rebuilt City Jerusalem, and in other parts of that land which their Fathers inhabited; acknowledge CHRIST the Son of David, to be their King, Who shall then reign in the hearts of these as he does in the hearts of Christians at this time; and worship him there in Christian Sanctuaries as long as the World remains; which wonderful Work those of different Professions in Religion shall see; and thence observe, and confess, the greatness of GOD's power, as well as his remarkable loving-kindness to his long despised People.

The Prophet Zechariah is also as particular, concerning the Conversion of the Jews, as any of the Prophets can be concerning their return to their own Land; as appears from the 10th verse of the xii Chapter of his Prophecy to the end of it. Our LORD also we find foretelling the return of his be-
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loved People into their own Land in these Words; mention'd in the XXI Chap. of St. Luke's Gospel; *And Jerusalem shall be troden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* St. Paul likewise declares that the Jews will be converted to the Christian Faith in these Words, mention'd in the iii Chap. of his II Epistle to the Corinthians; *But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart: Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the LORD, it shall be taken away: Now the LORD is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is there is liberty.* By which different passages is meant, that, tho' the Jews would long refuse owning the Messiah, and would long be kept out of their own Land, the time would come, in which the Spirit of the LORD would open their Understandings, as well as remove their prejudices; and that they should return to, and reside in their own Land. This Conversion of the Jews to the Christian Faith, and their exercise of it in their own Country, seems confirm'd by St. John, in the XIX Chap. of his Book of Revelation: For he there represents it as holy, and acceptable to GOD, by comparing that converted Church and CHRIST to a Bride and Bridegroom in the State of Marriage; CHRIST's accepting the Jews as a part of his Church upon Earth, his qualifying them for the favour of GOD by his Merits and Righteousness, and their grateful behaviour after their being thus taken into Covenant with GOD thro' CHRIST, being best describ'd by that nearness of Relation, that love and tenderness, which is occasion'd by the state of Marriage. And, as this Union with CHRIST in the Jewish Church, so long separated from him, would be Matter of great Joy to the Inhabitants of Heaven, we find them call'd upon to discover that Joy, by rejoicing at the arrival of that happy Season, and the thing itself also describ'd in these Words;

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Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him: For the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be array'd in fine Linen, clean and white; for the fine Linen is the Righteousness of the Saints. Now that this must be applicable to the Jewish converted Church only is plain from considering, that the Conversion of the Jews is a work much later than the first planting of Christianity: For it can't be understood of the Christian Church subsisting throughout all ages to that time, in regard that Marriage was concluded many hundred years before.

The Jews thus converted to Christianity, and seated in their own Country, by their grateful behaviour towards that gracious GOD, who thus called them out of Darkness into his marvellous Light, will so recommend themselves to the protecting Divine goodness, as to be permitted to live in great comfort and prosperity; which happy and flourishing State will so excite the envy of the Antichristian fraternity, then remaining in the World, as to produce a combination of these Brethren in Iniquity against them. This the Prophet Ezechiel seems plainly to foretell in the xxxviii Chap. of his Prophecy, from verse the 8 to verse the 17. The same we find foretold also by St. John in the xvi Chap. of his Book of Revelation, from verse the 13 to verse the 17. But, notwithstanding the prodigious numbers of these Enemies to the converted Jews, in vain will their attempts against them be render'd thro' the amazing power of GOD, exerted miraculously in their favour. This the Prophet Ezechiel is found affirming in the Chap. before mention'd, from verse the 17 to the end; and in the xxxix Chap. from the beginning to the end. St. John also seems to affirm the same thing in the two last verses of the xiv Chap. of his Book of Revelation;

lation; and in the xvi Chap. from verse the 18 to the end of it. But in the xix Chap. he is remarkably particular concerning this Matter, from verse the 11 to the end; all which assertions of these Prophetical Writers seem to me to prove one and the same thing; i. e. that CHRIST will act miraculously in favour of his beloved People the Jews, when converted to Christianity, and seated in their own Country, to the destruction of the mighty Antichristian Army, call'd Gog and Magog; which will combine together, in order to deprive GOD's People of their comfortable situation, and meet together also at a certain place agreed upon among themselves, here stil'd Armageddon, which word says the Learned Grotius, signifies the mount of Meeting; and which Dr. Fulk, by the Authority of St. Jerome, says signifies the Hill of Thieves; which amounts to the same thing; the business of the Antichristian army being to meet together to rob and steal from the converted Jews. This wonderful deliverance of the Christian Church, wrought so effectually and so contrary to the expectation of those, whose hatred towards it led them to contrive its ruine, may well be suppos'd to strike such a terror into its enemies, as well as render them glad to get within the Protection of so omnipotent a Defender as the Christians GOD shall then prove himself to be, as to make way for a general reception of Christianity.

In order to this will Preachers, sent from among those so amazingly protected, visit the different parts of the world; and proceed with wonderful success in enlarging the Christian Church till it shall take in all Nations; these most wonderful of all events, preparatory thereto, affording unanswerable arguments in favour of the Christian doctrine; which, together with Satan's not being at liberty to oppose them, will produce the intended valuable effects. And that this seems reasonable to suppose

pose will appear, from the hand these had in the Conversion of the world at first, immediately after the death of CHRIST; and from the respect paid to these by all the Preachers of Christianity wherever they resided, consisting in making them the offer of Salvation first. As therefore those, who, from their own knowledge, could satisfy others of the wonderful goodness of their Redeemer, in laying down his own life to save theirs, (this Tragedy having been acted in their own Country,) might be accounted the fittest persons to begin the work design'd to establish, and enlarge the Christian Church, so will those, so surprizingly deliver'd out of the enemies hand, be the most suitable for the further promoting the glorious cause of CHRIST; these being capable of assuring those, they converse with, of the far greater comfort arising from their converted state, than they ever experienc'd in any other, as well as how great things their glorified Saviour has done for them, both temporally, and spiritually; and which as those, these will then make their application to, may so easily be satisfied of the truth of, cannot fail of convincing them, of the necessity of yeilding to such advantageous proposals. But, as this requires better proof than conjecture only, let us see what the sacred Writings say concerning this supposition.

This St. Paul seems plainly to describe in these words, mention'd in the xi Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans; *If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? And if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall be the reconciling of them but life to the dead?* But the Prophet Isayah is very full in this matter in these words; mention'd in the xi Chap. of his Prophecy; *In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for*

for an Ensign to the People, and to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious. To the same purpose we find this Prophet speaking in the xlv Chap. of his Prophecy, and the 22 and 23 verses, in the lv Chap. and the 5 verse; in the lvi Chap. and the 8 verse; and many more places of his Prophecy. The Prophet Jeremiah says the same thing in the iii Chap. of his Prophecy, from verse the 16 to the 20. The same doctrine seems plainly mention'd also in the Prophecy of Ezechiel, by the Temple describ'd in the latter part of it; the glory of which evidently discovering, that this Prophecy was never yet fulfill'd; no such Temple having been ever enjoy'd by the Jewish Church. It follows therefore that this Prophecy remains yet to be fulfill'd: And that what is mention'd therein is not to be understood literally, but as a representation of the glorious state of the Christian Church, when the Jews, by being converted to Christianity, and seated in their own Country, are made a part of it, and remove from thence to convert the rest of the World, appears, not only from the description in general, but from some parts of it in particular: For from the waters issuing out of the Temple, their encreasing gradually till they became a great River, that river running into the Desert and the Sea, and healing the Waters of it, and, after that, causing the Fish to be found in great plenty where they were not before, and Trees growing upon the banks of it, which yielded Fruit for Meat and Medicine, because nourish'd by the Waters issuing out of the Temple, may well be understood the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, assisting the converted Jews in their endeavours to convert others; the encrease thereof also to all such, according to the holy use these made of it, and according to their several wants; the swelling and encreasing of the Christian Church in the continual addition of new converted Members; the removing

of these converted Jews into different parts of the World; and their continuing to do so till the whole would embrace the Christian Faith, who before knew nothing of it; these Missionaries, fed by the streams issuing out of the Temple, or supplied with wonderful degrees of spiritual assistance, being capable, not only of shewing all, they shall converse with, their mistake in professing any Religion but the Christian, but of imparting to them the way and means of obtaining spiritual Food, suitable to the nourishment of their Souls: And by the order to admit Strangers among them as fellow Citizens, and their City being describ'd as having twelve Gates, may it be as justly observ'd, that the Jews, thus converted to Christianity, shall reside in the country of Judea, and their rebuilt City Jerusalem, the name of the City mention'd in the last verse of this Prophecy in these words, *The LORD is there*, being still a further proof of the same thing.

The two last Chapters of the Book of Revelation seem also as clearly to describe this: For St. John's mentioning his beholding the Lamb's Wife, calling the City he saw the new Jerusalem, and describing it in so extraordinary a manner as he therein does, must be understood Spiritually; and to signify the glorious state of the Jews, when Converted to the Christian Faith, and the hand they would have in the conversion of the rest of the World; the Prophets of the Jewish Church having delivered themselves, concerning this glorious state, in almost the same terms as St. John there does; which may, with little trouble, be seen in Dr. Whitby's Treatise of the Millennium, at the end of his comment upon the new Testament, wherein he has put these different Prophecy's together.

There is indeed some difference between Ezechiel's description of this state of the Church, in the eight last Chapters of his Prophecy, and that of St. John in

in the Book of Revelation; I mean concerning a Temple, and a Sea in Ezechiel's description, and St. John's affirming that there was no Temple in his, nor any Sea as yet. But this disagreement may be reconcil'd in the following Manner. It must be consider'd here that the Jews, who had been long accustomed to a glorious Temple might more easily apprehend, and thence be inclin'd the more to value this intended goodness of GOD towards them, if describ'd by a Temple, and such other representations of it as his description contains; and therefore we find the Prophet Ezechiel expressing himself as he does therein. But St. John, as he was writing for the benefit and instruction of Christians, who had no such veneration for a Temple, set forth the same thing as it would really be; i. e. without any Temple; thereby shewing that they would be permitted to worship GOD in such places as would be convenient for them; such I mean as would be near their several habitations. And as St. John was describing the glorious state of the Jewish Church after their and the World's conversion during the thousand years of Satan's binding, in which all the World would be free from Antichristian opinions and practices, as well as worldly troubles and affliction, and which the World was full of when the converted Jews would begin their endeavours to convert it, represented by the Sea, and the healing of its waters: I say, as St. John was describing the state of the Christian Church which would be free from what Ezechiel represented by the Sea, he tells us that in his glorious state there was no Sea as yet; i. e. the state of the Church was to be holy, and prosperous, for the thousand years, which the 2 verse of the xx Chap. of Revelation tells us Satan was not permitted to disturb it in. In all other respects St. John and the Prophet Ezechiel, and the rest of the Jewish Prophets, which describe this state of the Church, agree. In this

this state St. John tells us from the 4 to the 7 verse of this Chapter, that, instead of living in subjection, as the Jews and the Saints of GOD generally did before this time, these would be advanc'd to Dignity and Authority in the Church, and which the Prophet Daniel also affirms in these words, mention'd in the vii Chap. of his Prophecy; *But the Saints of the most High shall take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever*; i. e. such as would then be endu'd with the Spirit, which those Martyrs had, who suffered Death for the cause of CHRIST, none of which had ever been of the Anchristian party, represented by their not Worshipping the Beast nor his Image, nor receiving his mark in their foreheads or hands; As John the Baptist was said to be Elias from his having the spirit of that Prophet. These he tells us lived, and reigned with CHRIST a thousand years; which is here accounted life from the dead, and call'd the first Resurrection; all those also, who, before this, had the Authority, i. e. the Antichristian Party, remaining dead in the same sense during the thousand years; at the end of which only, wherein Satan was to be again loosed, would any of these appear in the world. These he pronounceth as blessed, and holy who would be permitted to partake of this rising from the dead, here term'd the first Resurrection; not only because their state would be properly accounted blessed, and holy here, but because, as their enemy the Devil, would not be permitted to interrupt them in their works of holiness, there would be no danger of their losing their Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven; which loss is here term'd the second death. And these in their several generations, he tells us, would succeed each other in this holy, and prosperous state of the Church, for a thousand years, which he calls reigning with CHRIST; and which we find mention'd in the first Chapter of this Book.

in these words; *and every Eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him*; i. e. behold **CHRIST** with the eye of Faith, and exercise authority by his power working so wonderfully in favour of them; and that all these will be enabl'd by spiritual power to offer to **GOD**, and **CHRIST**, spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise.

That this glorious state of the Church is to take in all Nations, so as to leave no part of the world unconverted; appears from these words of the Psalmist, mention'd in the 2d Psalm; *Desire of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for thy possession*; and from these in the 72d Psalm; *his dominion shall be from the one Sea to the other, from the Flood unto the world's end; all Kings shall fall down before him; all Nations shall do him service; his Name shall remain under the Sun among the Posterities, which shall be blessed thro' him and all the Heathen shall praise him*. The same we find affirm'd by holy David and Isayah, and the peaceable state also set forth by them, in the 72d Psalm and the 7 verse; in the ii Chap. of the Prophecy of Isayah and in the 4 verse, and in the xi Chap. from verse the 1 to verse the 10; as well as in various other passages of sacred Scripture, too tedious to cite particularly.

The Christian Church having continu'd thus undisturb'd for many ages, if not for a thousand years, its old enemy, Satan, will be permitted to act the deceiving, and persecuting part again by it; and that both by himself and his Agents: For this seemeth to be foretold in these words mention'd in the xlvii Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Ezechiel; *But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed*; i. e. the waters issuing out of the Jewish Temple already explain'd, would not effectually heal the waters of the Sea as to have no part of them ever again infected as before. But,

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this be not hereby meant, St. John is very clear in this matter: For he tells us in the xx Chap. of his Book of Revelation, that *when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the Nations which are in the four quarters of the Earth Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the Sea: i. e. too successful* would that deceiver be in his temptatious attempts against the Church of CHRIST; even to the inspiring of its Members with the same evil desires; the inclining of them to delight in the same evil practices as he did before his binding; and the exciting of the same evil designs in them against it, appearing in attempts to overpower, and in combinations to destroy it: For St. John plainly foretells this desire and intention, (tho' they would be again disappointed as they were in their former attempts) in these words, mention'd in the same Chapter; *And they went upon the breadth of the Earth, and compassed the Camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City: And fire came out from GOD out of Heaven, and devoured them: And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the beast and the false Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever:* Soon after which St. John tells us, in the latter part of the same Chapter, that the general judgment will come on; and which, as his description of it is very moving, it would be proper to read over carefully. But, tho' St. John gives us to understand that Satan will be loosed a little season after the expiration of the thousand years, yet he mentions not how little that season will be. This the Prophet Daniel seems to be more particular in in these words, mention'd in the last Chapter of his Prophecy; *Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and thirty five days; i. e. blessed is he, who conti-*

nueth to act in such obedience to his holy inward Adviser, as to have the time of the general Judgment a comfortable season to him; these three hundred five and thirty days, added to the thousand, which the glorious state of the Church consists of, serving as an explanation of St. John's little season beforemention'd; and which, as it seems so well to agree with it, may possibly be the meaning of the Prophet Daniel in the words before cited.

Having thus explain'd what I at first propos'd in the best manner I can, I expect to have it ask'd what all this signifies? To this I answer in the following manner.

As the time for the Reign of Antichrist seems near run out, as it appears from his loss of power in Germany in Luther's time, in our own, and in other Nations, that his fall will be gradual, as G O D seems to have begun another great work in this age, preparatory to his further fall, and by such Instruments as have, not only shewn the insufficiency of Christian Profession without practice, but prevail'd on great Numbers to become burning, and shining lights, (i. e. by discovering a true Christian spirit,) in America, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, and other Nations in Europe, it seems necessary to encourage this Zeal, in order to make further advances towards it; and which the successful attempts of our Forefathers may well render us willing to imitate them in; And as no means are so likely to produce this good effect as setting forth the necessity of reviving Primitive Christian sincerity among us, which wrought so effectually among the Heathens, as to convert such Multitudes of them at the first planting of Christianity; this tending to set aside the use of a powerful Argument against a further Reformation which the Antichristian Party may but too justly use

use; I mean the little difference there is between the Religious behaviour of Protestants and themselves: I say as setting forth the necessity of holiness of life, or the practice of what our Religion teaches us, is most likely to produce such effects as divine Providence seems intending to bring about, i. e. preparations towards thrusting that *Man of Sin* out of his Throne, it concerns all, that wish well to the cause of CHRIST, to engage heartily in what affords so fair a prospect of answering this excellent end: And as this great work requires proper hands for the carrying of it on, what have the Clergy of this Nation else to do, (to whom this work properly belongs,) but to rise up as one Man, to forward so glorious an undertaking? Would these but use the power GOD has given them for this purpose; i. e. visit from house to house those committed to their Charge; examine them at such times concerning their Faith, and practice of Religious duties; impart likewise advice and reproof as they see occasion, and continue to do so; spend their time in helping each other, and contriving how to be most useful in their several stations, those residing in small Parishes, or thinly inhabited, offering their brotherly services to those of larger, or more populous; resolve, not only to live frugally, but to deny themselves many of those temporal conveniences, which their circumstances would admit of; convey the many Bags of Gold, which this prudential management would enable them to spare, to such as stand in need of their seasonable assistance, pressing Religious considerations while they are distributing their Benefactions; and would they but exert themselves with a becoming earnestness in their endeavours to promote their LORD's Kingdom, not forgetting to add example to precept, such means, joyn'd with frequent prayers to GOD for a blessing upon them, could

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could not but powerfully affect those of this Na-
tion in the present Age.

To this perhaps it may be answer'd that, were it so as I have represented the case to be with the Christian Church at present; i. e. that GOD had begun a great work, in order to bring about this glorious design; and that, were I not mistaken in my explanation of the Prophecies before mention'd, none of those now call'd upon to become Agents, or Instruments in this great work, would be backward in assisting, even to the utmost of their power, towards dethroning the great Antichrist. But, as this is only conjecture, there can be no necessity for such proceedings as I have been here recommending. This, I acknowledge, is but conjecture: Neither do I pretend to be positive in having so explain'd the Prophecies, as not to be mistaken concerning their true meaning. I therefore insist not on this, as the only reason for such a behaviour in the clergy in general of this Nation, as would render them a Praise in the Earth: But, if I can produce other sufficient, what I contend for ought readily to be complied with; and whether I can, or not, let the following remarks, and reasons determine.

Whoever considers the present conduct of the generality of the Members of our Church, and compares it with the doctrine, and duties, belonging to it, cannot but perceive that these are Christians in Name only: For tho' these say, when the necessity of a lively Faith is urg'd to them, as a means of enabling them to act like Christians, and without which they never can, in the language of the Jews of old; *The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD are we*; i. e. tho' nominal Christians tell those, that advise them to use the means of obtaining a lively Faith, that they all have this Faith, nay insist upon it that it is so with them, yet their actions discover

that they have not: For if they had, it would put them upon being zealous and earnest in the exercise of Religious duties, as well as upon endeavouring to avoid the evil customs and practices of the world; and not suffer them to remain cold and luke-warm in the discharge of the one, or to persist in the indulgence of the other; their being deficient herein declaring at the same time, in which these words proceed out of their mouths, that they are not the words of truth. It follows therefore that they know not what a lively Faith is, or they would not content themselves with such a Faith as Devils, and wicked Men have. For no less can be said of those, whose ill lives prove them not to be the Children of GOD; these instead of being in the road to Salvation, being manifestly in *the broad way leading to destruction.*

It may also be as justly observ'd, that, tho' Antichrist in Rome and other Popish countries the means, prescribed in this discourse to our Clergy for this purpose, are not likely to bring about the fall of, yet such might tend greatly to the throwing down of his authority in these Kingdoms, to which we belong; which sure is a consideration of some importance. For tho' (blessed be GOD for this great mercy,) the Antichristian party among us is inconsiderable, when compar'd with the far greater number, which our Church consists of, yet these, when consider'd separately, are much too numerous, and therefore not unworthy of notice.

If this then be the case with us of this Nation, and to these remarks it may be added, that the Emissaries of Rome are daily labouring to increase their numbers, I leave it to any impartial Person, whether there is not a necessity for better means than those now in use; these having hitherto prov'd ineffectual in both these cases. And, if no better means of turning these erring Brethren from darkness to light, (those I mean of our own Church, as well as those of
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the Antichristian party,) can be propos'd, this becomes one unanswerable reason for such a behaviour in its Clergy as I have already describ'd.

A second reason is the prospect of success from such endeavours the two following considerations afford; i. e. having the truth to offer at such times, and the truth having such powerful Advocates to recommend it: For as the doctrine of our Church has so stable a foundation to stand upon as the word of GOD, and as no Nation in the Christian World hath a Body of Men for its Clergy of greater learning, or greater natural Abilities, how can it be imagin'd that the endeavours of these, acting thus in obedience to the divine Will, for the glory of GOD, and the good of their fellow Christians, should be unsuccessful?

A third reason is the taking off that objection against the necessity of Reformation, and a greater earnestness in Religious exercises, which the vain of the World make as oft as they are press'd to alter their conduct in these respects; I mean that many of the Clergy are as indifferent about these things as themselves, indulge themselves in the pleasures of the World as much as they, and spend their time as vainly and unprofitably, who have Souls to save as well as they; and that consequently, if there were so much danger of destroying them by such a behaviour as these exercise, they would be more earnest in cautioning them against such behaviour than they now are, and more careful in avoiding what they now do not: I say such a behaviour in the Clergy in general would, at least take off this objection, if their appearing to be thus in earnest did not move the vain of the world to be in earnest in their spiritual concerns also. For this would plainly prove, that the ill conduct of nominal Christians could not be owing to the ill example, or negligence of their spiritual instructors, which can never be justly said till the experiment has been made.

A fourth reason is the countenancing, and encouraging those Ministers, who do at present, or may resolve to act in this manner for the future, and the preserving of them from the scorn and contempt of the vain of the world: For, were all to be thus intent on the duty of their station, it could not be said to any in particular, that what these take upon them to do, or advise others to do, is unnecessary, because many of those, whose learning and knowledge is full as great, or rather much greater than theirs, declare, both in word and practise, that it is not; neither in such a case would there be any room to charge any in particular with Novelty, singularity, affectation, spiritual Pride, or Lunacy upon this account.

A fifth reason is the opportunity this would afford, not only of knowing by whom; and by what means, the People committed to their charge are perverted, as well as of setting them right, where they find any misled; or in danger of being so, but of becoming acquainted with the spiritual state of all such: And that as much as this is expected of the Clergy in general; as well as to give directions from time to time as they see occasion, the form of Ordination of Priests is a sufficient proof: For therein they promise in the most solemn manner, in the presence of GOD, and in the face of a Christian congregation, nay take the holy Sacrament of the LORD's Supper upon it, that they will do all that lies in them to reform and instruct all that stand in need of their help; that for this purpose they will lay aside all worldly cares and studies as much as possible, worldly pleasures and vanities also; use, not only publick, but private monitions, and exhortations, to the whole, as well as the sick; and that they will seek for CHRIST's Sheep, that are dispers'd abroad, with this view.

A sixth reason is gratitude for the favours their Redeemer hath vouchsafed them. As the LORD of life thought nothing too much to do for them,

not even the shedding of his precious Blood, sure these ought not to think any labour, time, or expence too much for him in those he died to save. Nay this, for their own credit in the world, the Clergy in general ought to comply with; in regard all in a regenerate state are ready to use all the ways, and means they can think of, to bring others into the same. Consequently an omission in this respect is a plain proof, that such, in whom this is found, are not what they would be taken for.

A seventh reason is the promise of exceeding great, and valuable rewards to all, that strive to quit themselves well in their Pastoral employment, and the threats of severe Punishment to those, that do not, contain'd in holy Scripture. These considerations I might greatly enlarge upon; But as a word to the Wise is sufficient, I shall only add that these Reasons, I hope, will excite a burning zeal, in all my Reverend Brethren, for the cause of so good a Master, allowing that I am mistaken in my suppositions concerning the other Prophecies, as well as that mention'd in these words; *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection: On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of GOD and of CHRIST, and shall reign with him a thousand Years.*

Now to GOD &c.



S E R M O N IX.

On the duty of Allegiance.

I. Peter II. 13. and 14.

Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the LORD's sake: whether it be to the King as supreme; or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

TH E S E words are a sufficient proof of the necessity of Obedience in subjects to their sovereigns. But, as some among us are observ'd to withhold this Obedience from those, to whom it is due, and seem desirous of having an opportunity of yeilding it to those, who have no right to it, I shall consider them in the following manner.

First I intend setting forth not only the necessity of Government, but what sort of Obedience as well as to whom the Obedience, so earnestly press'd by St. Peter in the Text, is due in these Nations.

And secondly affording reasons for confining it to the present royal Family, to whom it of Right belongs.

First I intend setting forth not only the necessity of Government, but what sort of Obedience, as well as to whom the Obedience, so earnestly press'd

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by St. Peter in the Text, is due in these Nations.

That there should be some invested with Authority in all Nations will appear, from considering the great use this power is of in the preservation, and protection of all in general, as well as of every one in particular: For tho', in cases of Invasion, it is the Interest of all in general to be unanimous, vigorous, and speedy in their resolutions of expelling the common enemy, yet, as distant parts of invaded Nations feel not what those do, which are first fallen upon, such, without proper encouragers, would be too slow in their Motions, as well as resolutions; even to the affording of opportunity to the Invaders to effect their destructive purposes. Whereas, when there are proper persons, appointed to act for the benefit of the whole, by being endu'd with power to compel the subjects of invaded Kingdoms to join together in time, the whole Nation may, not only be preserv'd from ruine, but from the disturbance, and attempts of Foreigners: For, when it becomes publickly known that there are such, whose interest it is to protect and defend the Country they preside over, Invaders will be the more discouraged in their rapacious designs. Nor less useful are such, with regard to the preservation of Peace and Tranquility, among the Subjects of the same Kingdom: For, were there not in all Kingdoms such as are capable of punishing offenders, either with Death, or other Punishments, according to the nature of the Offences committed, as well as of obliging those, that injure others in their Persons, Goods, or Possessions, to make satisfaction for the wrong done, there would be no such thing as Justice, or Property in any Nation. This the very Heathens long ago were so sensible of that they, not only set forth in their Writings the necessity of Government, but prescribed Rules for rendering it most useful.

useful. But, if none of these had ever perceived, or describ'd the advantage of living under the regularity of Government, and there could be no instance produc'd of the like, but among Christians only, that alone ought to be of weight sufficient to encourage, and countenance the use of it: For whom should Christians regard so much as their Creator? Or whom should these be directed by so soon as that Redeemer, from whom they derive their honourable Title? And that GOD in the Old Testament, as well as CHRIST in the New, approv'd, and prescribed also this regularity, and subjection among Men, appears from what we find revealed in sacred Scripture concerning it.

This may be prov'd from these words, mention'd in the iv Chap. of the Prophecy of the Prophet Daniel; *The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and he giveth it to whomsoever he will:* From these in the ii Chapter; *He removeth Kings and setteth up Kings:* From these mention'd in the viii Chap. of the Book of Proverbs; *By me Kings reign and Princes decree Justice.* From these mention'd in the xxii Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel; *Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsars:* And from these in the xvii Chap. *Lest we should offend them, go thou to the Sea, and cast an hook and take up the first Fish that cometh up. And when thou hast open'd his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of Money; That take and give unto them for me and thee.* The three first of these Passages plainly prove, that it is agreeable to the Creator, and Preserver of the World, that Nations should be under Government; it being positively said therein, that all Kings, and Governours, owe their power to the permission, or appointment of GOD; which could not be, if such were not agreeable to, and approved by him: And the two last prove that the same is equally agreeable to CHRIST, or he would not have own'd the authority

thority of the Romane Emperour; or have advis'd others to do so. So that, as living under Rules, and Laws, and under such Governments as are capable of obliging all to act according to their lawful directions, is, not only attended with so good effects, but manifestly agreeable to the Divine Will, it may well be concluded, that Government is necessary in all Nations.

But, lest it should be here ask'd, what sort of Government is most agreeable to GOD? permit me to observe in this place that GOD leaves all Nations to their liberty, to choose what kind of Government they like best. This plainly appears from his indulgence in this respect to the Jews, taken Notice of in the viii Chap. of the 1st Book of Samuel; For therein we find it remark'd, that the Jews, who had long liv'd under the Government of Priests and Prophets, term'd upon that account a Theocracy, upon their desiring to be under a regal Government, were permitted to have a King over them. The same appears also, from the difference observeable in the kinds of Government in Christian Nations; some of these being govern'd by Emperours, some by Kings; some by persons of regal Power, but not bearing the title of Kings; and some joined in Authority, and acting together with their Kings. These, differing considerably from each other, as well in Rules, and Laws, as in the exercise of power, I need not severally describe; this being foreign to my present purpose. 'Tis sufficient that I observe in general, that the difference of kinds of Government in different Nations makes no alteration in the obedience, requir'd in holy Scripture, to those in Authority. And therefore we don't find GOD prescribing any particular kind of Government to Christians, tho' he is very positive in insisting on Obedience to such Governours as the People, among whom they live, think fit to set over them; of which the following passages of
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sacred Scripture are a manifest proof. Says Solomon in the xxiv Chap. of his Book of Proverbs; *My Son fear thou the LORD and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to Change:* and again in these mention'd in the viii Chap. of his Book of Ecclesiastes; *I counsel thee to keep the Kings commandment, and that in regard of the Oath of GOD:* By which he means, that a proper respect every Man is under an indispensable obligation of affording to those in Authority, consisting in a submissive behaviour to their Persons, and a ready obedience to their lawful Commands. The like advice we find given by Moses, long before Solomon's days, in these words, mention'd in the xxii Chap. of his Book of Exodus; *Thou shalt not curse nor speak evil of the Ruler of thy People;* and which Solomon also agrees with him in, in these words in the x Chap. of his Book of Ecclesiastes; *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought;* which last passages shew, that Obedience to those in Authority is to appear in a cautious avoiding of all reproachful, or disrespectful expressions, and reflections, as well as secret evil intentions, or desires towards them. And the Writers of the New Testament likewise are so very positive, and particular also, concerning this duty, that there is no possibility of mistaking them; nor any room left to doubt of the necessity of this obligation. One of those, who was a chosen Vessel to bear his LORD's Name before the Gentiles, and the Kings over them, we find delivering himself concerning this doctrine in these words, mention'd in the xxiii Chap. of the Acts of the Holy Apostles; *It is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People;* and again in these, in the xiii Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans; *Let every Soul be subject to the higher powers: For there is no power but of GOD: The Powers that be are ordain'd of GOD; whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance*

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Ordinance of GOD; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation: Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath but for Conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye Tribute also: For they are GOD's Ministers attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour: i. e. Christians are hereby inform'd, that Persons in Authority are not only allow'd therein, but appointed for that purpose by GOD himself, as I before observ'd; and therefore are commanded, on pain of damnation, to yield a proper obedience to all such; and that, not only in a ready compliance with all their lawful Commands, in contributing cheerfully to the support of Government in the payment of Taxes, as well as respectful behaviour to their Persons, and all that are in Authority under them, thro' fear of Punishment, but out of a principle of Obedience, in compliance with the Will and Command of GOD. As particular also is the same Apostle concerning this duty in these words, in the 3d Chap. of his Epistle to Titus; Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and powers, to obey Magistrates, and to be ready to every good work. Nor less so is St. Peter: For, in the ii Chap. of his II general Epistle, he is found accounting such, as refus'd complying with this duty, persons of no Religion, and therefore styling them presumptuous and self willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities. St. Jude also ranks these among those, that are appointed unto Condemnation, styling them filthy dreamers, and declaring that they presume also to despise Dominion, and to speak evil of Dignities.

Thus positive, ye see, are the sacred Scriptures, not only in declaring the necessity of Government, but of obedience in Subjects towards those in Authority

thority in all Nations; be they either Kings, or Persons invested with the supreme Power, by whatever Names they are distinguish'd. And that the Apostles, and Primitive Christians, understood this Duty as I have represented it appears from their submitting to grievous tortures, and most painful deaths; and these without ever attempting, or advising any to resist, or oppose such Governours as thought fit to act so cruelly by them.

If this then be the Christian Doctrine, and it is unlawful for those, that profess it, to refuse obeying those in Authority in the Nation, where such reside, I expect to be ask'd, how comes it to pass that the doctrine of resistance was so manifestly encourag'd? Nay, declar'd agreeable to the written Word, when the generality of this Nation rose up, and resisted King James the second? In answer to this question it must be observ'd, that the duty of Obedience, in Subjects here to those in Authority, consists in a proper respect to their Persons, and submission to their lawful Commands; these being capable of commanding unlawfully, as well as Subjects are of acting unlawfully; which when ever they do, Obedience is not due to them. In objection to this it is pretended, that Kings were originally endu'd with unlimited power; none upon Earth being capable of calling them to account for what they did, and therefore accountable to GOD only. This, (tho' it is easier said than prov'd,) I shall not in this place contradict; but admit that it was as these would have it; i. e. that Kings were at first invested with uncontrollable Authority. But suppose a King of this sort should part with some of this Authority, admitting others into a share of it together with himself. Can it, after this, be said that such a King is as absolute as before? Or that he may re-assume the power he so parted with at pleasure? The nature of a Gift destroys such a supposition: For tho' any thing

in particular may justly be said to be mine, while it remains in my possession, and as long as I avoid conveying away my Right to it, yet, when I have given it to another, my Right to it is gone. It then becomes the property of another, and cannot belong to me, unless the Person, to whom I gave it, relinquishes his Right, and conveys it, either by gift, or upon some valuable consideration, to me again. The very same is it with Kings parting with a portion of their Authority to their Subjects. As long as the Authority belonging to them remains unalienated, so long it may properly be accounted theirs, and not at all to belong to any other. But, as soon as any part thereof is conferr'd upon others by those, who have power to do so, what such Kings so grant ceases any longer to belong to them: Neither can such Kings take again what they so gave without the consent of those, to whom they gave it; it being then their property, who are at such times in possession of it, and not of those, whose property it was in time past. This is exactly the Case with us of this Nation: For, admitting the power of our former Kings to have been ever so great, their granting a part of it to their Subjects, and obliging themselves to govern according to such particular Laws, not only sets aside their former power, but lays them under an obligation of acting according to their own limitations; unless those, to whom part of their power was given, are willing to give again what was before given to them; that being after this no longer the property of our Kings, but of their Subjects. We of this Nation therefore have as good a Right to the Privileges, granted to our Forefathers by former Kings, as our Kings have to the Authority still remaining to them; which consideration shews that there is a wide difference between us, in our present situation, and the Primitive Christians, who had no such Rights and Liberties granted to them; and which

which causes the behaviour, which would have been Rebellion in them, to be justifiable in us, and no way contrary to the command concerning this duty in holy Scripture; the obedience due from us being where our Kings govern legally, and not otherwise. In order therefore to set ourselves right, with regard to our duty as Subjects, we need only to look back to that remarkable agreement between the King of this Nation and his People, known by the Name of Magna Charta; which shews that our Kings are admitted to govern among us upon certain Conditions, and that we are to determine our Obedience according to their observance of the Conditions performable on their part.

This, upon examination, will shew us what is the right of the Crown, and what are the Rights and Privileges of the People, and consequently when the duty of obedience is due, and when not. So that, upon considering the nature of our Constitution, it will appear that our Kings govern legally when they observe the Conditions they agree to at their Admission as Kings, i. e. according to the Laws of the Kingdom; such I mean as they find in force at the time of their admission, or such as shall be enacted by the mutual agreement of the three Estates of the Kingdom, the King, Lords, and Commons; that our Kings have a right to succeed each other in an hereditary Way; and that their succeeding each other after that manner is never to be alter'd, but upon unavoidable necessity.

Under this unavoidable necessity were our oppressed Forefathers in the days of King James the second: For the great Antichrist (the Church of Rome) had invented a method of depriving the Members of the true Christian Church of their Rights and Privileges, which is not only contrary to Reason and the word of GOD, but such as even Heathens and Infidels account unlawful; which subtil contrivance

it was impossible to set aside the ill effects of otherwise than by refusing to admit, as Kings, any of the Antichristian Party; I mean that hellish doctrine of theirs, consisting in the lawfulness of a King's breaking his word and promise, if made with, or given to such as they term Hereticks; and that it is pleasing to GOD by violent means to extirpate Heresy root and branch. Hereby they cut off all our Rights and Privileges at one blow; and as effectually set aside the use of Magna Charta as if it had never taken place: For by this Devilish subtilty a King had nothing more to do than to get himself seated upon the throne of his Ancestors, by engaging to fulfill the Conditions performable on his part, and afterwards to break thro' all his Obligations under the pretence of its being lawful not to keep Faith with Hereticks; nay to become a destroyer of Mankind, whom regal Government was intended to preserve; these pretending, that it is agreeable to GOD to have as many of those murder'd as they are pleas'd to pronounce Hereticks.

That this is a doctrine of the Church of Rome appears, not only from their Writings, but from their taking every opportunity of putting it in practice: For at Paris, in France, was there a most remarkable Instance of this breach of Faith in the Papists towards those of the Protestant Profession; and of attempts also of a most bloody nature to extirpate Heresie, as they are pleas'd to term the doctrine of Protestants. The Papists of that Kingdom, finding themselves unable so effectually to injure the Protestant Cause by any other means, resolv'd to bring about their abominable designs by treachery. In order to this they made a Peace with the Protestants with whom they had been long contending in war: And, the better to deceive them, propos'd a Marriage between the sister of their Persecutor, the King of France, and the
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King of Navarre, the Chief of the Protestant Party. But, instead of meaning any such thing as they pretended, tho' they acted the part of deceit so far as to have a Marriage solemniz'd between the parties propos'd, they took the advantage the presence of the King of Navarre, and those that attended him, afforded them: For at midnight the watch Bell rung, a signal agreed upon for the Popish Party to fall upon the Protestants; which occasion'd the taking Prisoners the King of Navarre, and his Companion the Prince of Conde; and the murdering of Admiral Coligni, and upwards of thirty Thousand of the greatest, and most powerful of the Protestant Party; as may be seen in Heylin's Cosmography P. 148.

At the time of the Reformation in Germany, when Luther's preaching had open'd the Eyes of such Numbers as then renounc'd the errors of Popery, that faithful Preacher had procur'd the Emperour of Germany's safe conduct to go to, and from the City Worms. There we find the Pope and Clergy acting upon the Principle beforemention'd, in order to get Luther within their power: For in the 345th Page of his *Mensalia Colloquia* are these words concerning it; "The Pope at that time wrote to the Emperour, that he should not perform the safe conduct; for which end all the Bishops also pressed the Emperour."

Queen Mary before her advancement to the Throne promised the men of Suffolk, the better to engage them in her Interest by whose help she came to the Crown, to leave Religion in the same state she found it; and to content herself with the profession of her own Religion. But, notwithstanding her solemn obligation to the contrary, she soon discover'd that she had learnt the lesson of the Antichristian Party; I mean breach of promise, and imbruing her hands in the Blood of thousands;
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the venerable grey hairs of our Church's aged Bishops being not spar'd by that persecuting Queen.

King James the second acted manifestly upon the same principle, regarding neither his frequent promises, nor the Laws of the Kingdom. These he traml'd under feet continually; resolving to proceed in as arbitrary a way as he thought fit, till he had rooted out the Protestant Religion, and set up Popery in its room. This appearing plainly to our Forefathers, they thought themselves oblig'd, for the sake of themselves and their Posterity, to take such measures as might put an effectual stop to these Tyrannical proceedings. To gain this excellent end they made application to King William, the third, and the states of Holland, for their Assistance; which with their seasonable Aid, they soon did; and for which friendly aid the Antichristian Party take all opportunities of discovering their hatred to them; these misrepresenting their actions and Intentions as much as possible, in order to divide the British and Dutch Nations, lest our old friends should be as ready to disappoint them in their future, as they were in their former attempts against the Protestant Cause.

Thus deliver'd from present imminent destruction, the next great work our wise forefathers had upon their hands was to counterwork, so as to render it ineffectual, the subtil Contrivance of the great Antichrist to deprive us of our Rights and liberties. This they found there was no other way left to do, than by making every one of the Antichristian Party incapable of governing in these Kingdoms. And therefore they made such an alteration in the Right of succession, as for ever excluded all Papists from any pretence of Claim to the Crown, leaving it in all other respects as they found it. This those, that have no regard for Religion, or such, whose desperate fortune renders them

them unconcern'd about the loss of our Rights and liberties, perhaps may snarl at, and take upon them to account an act of injustice in our wise forefathers. But, when it is consider'd that this is pleading for Baal, pleading for Antichrist being as much pleading for Idolatry now as pleading for Baal was formerly, what such say can't deserve so much as an answer, unless it be to the following effect, i. e. the Antichristian Party have no room to complain at being in the Pit which hath long been grievous to them, because it was dug by themselves; our prudent forefathers; by the help of a gracious GOD, having so overwitted them as to cause the Trap, laid for others, to catch themselves. Consequently, if they find the burden heavy they must groan on, and thank themselves for it; these having laid us under a necessity of acting thus warily and prudently. And that the step, taken at that time, was the wisest, that was ever taken by the leading part of this Nation, daily experience teaches us: For hereby, are not only our Temporal, but our Spiritual Rights, and Liberties, effectually secur'd; nay all disputes concerning the right of Succession so effectually set aside also, that none can pretend not to know to whom the Obedience, mention'd in the former part of this discourse, is due; i. e. to his present Majesty; who ascended the Throne in a legal way, and who hath govern'd ever since according to our Laws.

Having thus shewn the necessity of Obedience to those in Authority, what sort of Obedience is requir'd of us of this Nation, and to whom it is due, I now proceed to afford Reasons for confining it to those, to whom it of Right belongs.

The first reason for confining this Obedience to his present Majesty, and all in Authority under him, is his having an unquestionable Right to it. Consequently it must be an act of the greatest injustice to withhold it from him. And that his present Majesty hath

hath as unquestionable a right to it, as we have to our Rights and Liberties, or our Estates and Possessions, will appear from his having taken possession of the Throne, as much according to the Laws of the Kingdom as any of us take possession of our Estates, or Effects at the decease of those, whose property they were before: And that the same right remains still to this gracious Sovereign, as much as our right to our Estates, or Possessions, does to us, will appear from the following consideration; i. e. that he has no more forfeited his right to the Crown, by acting otherwise than according to our Laws, than we ourselves have forfeited our right to our Estates, or Possessions, by acting otherwise than according to the same Laws. If therefore we should look upon it as an act of injustice to be depriv'd of what we are in possession of without any just cause, is it not equally unjust to deprive his Majesty of the Obedience due to him, when no just cause can be assign'd for the withholding of it? And if we ourselves should say to those, who would act violently by us, and force our property out of our hands; at least shew us wherein we have deserv'd this severe usage. What laws have we broken? Or how have we render'd ourselves incapable of enjoying what we have an unquestionable Title to? I say, if we should argue thus in favour of our own right, ought we not, in point of Justice, to do so to those who would rob his Majesty of the Obedience due to him? Ought we not to say; shew us what Laws he has broken; how has he merited a disobedient behaviour at the hands of his Subjects? Wherein has he refus'd acting for their benefit, either with regard to the repealing of old Laws found hurtful to them, or consenting to the enacting of new as oft as occasion requir'd? Or wherein did he ever aim at depriving us of any of our Rights, or Liberties? As none of these things can be urg'd against his present Majesty,

sty, but it may be observ'd on the contrary that he takes pleasure in being a Father to his People, protecting and defending them to the utmost of his power, it must be an act of the highest injustice to withhold our Obedience from him, either by engaging in Rebellious acts, or in attempts towards them; or in countenancing, or encouraging those that make it their business to bring all into confusion.

A second reason is its being inconsistent with our temporal interest to refuse this Obedience.

That it is our temporal interest to confine our Obedience to his present Majesty will appear from the improbability of ever enjoying our Civil Rights under the Government of any of the Antichristian Party; this having been sufficiently experienc'd to our Cost already: Neither is there the least prospect of having Government carried on at so easy an expence, nor so much to the satisfaction of the Inhabitants of these Kingdoms, notwithstanding the unreasonable noise of Taxes and standing Armies, which the Antichristian Party are continually deafening our Ears with, by any other Governour. For, were the pretended heir to these Kingdoms to reign among us, what immense Sums must be rais'd to discharge the large debt, he must have contracted by living so many Years upon Credit, or Charity, or both; It being inconsistent with the glory of the British Nation to have it said, their King is not able to pay his just debts? And what Obligations must he be under to Foreigners, to prefer these to places of Honour, and Trust, before the Natives of these Kingdoms? In such a Case we should, not only have the misfortune of seeing crowds of hungry Frenchmen, and Italians, eating up the Bread of our own People, but ourselves oblig'd to expend most of our Estates in supporting them, and their necessitous Monarch. And as to the noise the Antichristian Party make concerning large Taxes, Publick debts, and standing

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Armies,

Armies, if these be an oppression upon the Subject, (as doubtless they are,) they are all brought upon us by their means; their continual treasonable Practices, their many private Plots, and open Rebellions, having oblig'd us, and do still, to be at prodigious expence to frustrate their iniquitous attempts against us. 'Tis indeed abominable that these should be the cause of these Oppressions, and then charge the innocent with the guilt of their own evil actions, and intentions. But this is not to be wonder'd at, when we consider that those, who will be guilty of Treason, and the highest injustice, cannot be suppos'd to boggle at endeavours to cast the odium upon others. The Antichristian Party must be expected to have Antichristian Principles. And therefore we must not regard what these say, or do, otherwise than to keep them out of Power; to watch them narrowly, that their evil designs may be always prevented in time; and to pray earnestly to GOD, that these may be always as inconsiderable a body as they are at present; or rather continually lessening till they dwindle into Nothing.

A third reason for confining our Obedience to his present Majesty is its being our Spiritual interest to do so.

That it is a vain imagination, to suppose our holy Religion can be so well supported by any of the Popish persuasion, is plain from what we already know of such Governours; nothing being so agreeable to these, as the destruction of it. The pretence of a possibility, or probability of this under such Governours, may perhaps deceive those, who have never suffer'd by their easy credulity. But to attempt to convince those of such possibilities, or probabilities, whose experience has shewn them that there is no dependance upon what such Governours promise, can sure be no other than labour to no purpose. However

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ver this may be justly observ'd: I mean that our holy Religion must be safer under the protection of a Governour, whose Ancestry have been as remarkable as himself in the defence of it, than under such a one as thinks he does GOD service in killing those that profess it. A Governour we now have (blessed be GOD for this great mercy!) who makes our Cause his own. A Governour this, if the Electoral Princes are the ten Kings who are to destroy the great Antichrist, whose Posterity will be as remarkable for their steady adherence to, and advancement of the Protestant Cause, as his Forefathers have been in time past. But, allowing that I am mistaken in this supposition, it must be observ'd, that his present Majesty hath long been, and still is a defender of our holy Faith against the Antichristian Party, nay, that there is not the least prospect of having our Religious ends answer'd by any other Governour. So that, as our Spiritual interest depends so much upon the present Royal Family, what else have we to do but to value them as highly as we ought? Or how can we better discover that we do so, than by a grateful behaviour to those, who have so good a title to it?

The last reason for the Obedience propos'd is the positive command of GOD. And that this is the command of GOD I have sufficiently prov'd, by shewing that King George is our lawful Governour; and that he hath long acted as such a one ought, and does still. Consequently there can be no pretence for explaining away the force of any of the Passages of sacred Scripture already cited; all which pronounce it unlawful to withhold Obedience from this Governour. As therefore justice, and our own interest, so plainly concur with the word of GOD, in setting forth the necessity of confining our Obedience to this valuable King, it cannot be amiss if I end this

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168 *A further* DEFENCE of the (Serm. IX.)
discourse with entreating all without exception, to
submit to every lawful Ordinance of his present Ma-
jesty; and this *for the LORD's sake*, considering
him *as supreme*; or of his Governours *as unto them*
that are sent by him for the punishment of evil do-
ers, and for the praise of them that do well.

Now to G O D, &c.



S E R M O N



S E R M O N X.

On the duty of the Rich and Great.

J A M E S Chap. V. verses 1. 2. 3.

Go to now ye rich Men, weep and howl for the miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and your silver is canker'd; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat up your flesh as it were fire: Ye have heaped up treasure for the last days.

THE three next verses afford us a reason for the punishment describ'd in the Text; and which the Jews, to whom they might be more peculiarly written, experienc'd, even in the literal sense of the words of it, at the destruction of Jerusalem. But, as they were intended also for a more general use, even that of all ages to the end of the world, we must view them in a spiritual Light; the effects of the abuse of riches in this sense being of a far more terrible Nature than any temporal whatsoever. Consider'd thus, we must understand the Apostle assuring all those, that apply their power, and wealth, to other purposes than they were design'd for, and more especially to such as consist in acts of covetousness and injustice, of fraud and oppression, or of living irreligiously, and in a luxurious manner, that
their

their future fate will be most dreadful; and which, for the better understanding of it, he compares to garments, render'd useless by being moth eaten, to gold and silver coin so canker'd as not to be current money, and to the misery the putting of Fire to our Bodies must occasion: For says he to all such; *Go to now ye rich Men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and your silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat up your flesh as it were fire: Ye have heaped up treasure for the last days.*

That no such fatal consequences may arise to any of you, thro' a too favourable construction of the duty of the rich, in the use of the talents they are entrusted with, permit me, in my further discourse upon these words, to lay before you what is requir'd of persons of a plentiful fortune, eminent station, or superiour abilities.

In order to this, it will be proper to consider the Parable of the five, two, and one Talents: For we thereby find, that there was a time of reckoning with those, to whom the beforementioned number of Talents was deliver'd; and that each of them was rewarded, or punish'd, at the time of giving up their accounts, according to the improvement, or abuse of them. This then cannot but inform us, that Christians are expected to use their knowledge, their power, and their substance in this world, for the glory of GOD, and the good of others as well as of themselves, these being by no means at their own disposal, unless they are totally regardless of what is to come hereafter, to use as they think fit. The same doctrine appears also from these words, recorded in the iv Chap. of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians; *What hast thou which thou didst not receive?* St. Paul likewise, in his Epistle to Timothy, advises

advises those, that are rich, *not to trust in their riches, but in the living GOD who giveth us all things.* And St. James is as positive, in affirming that the knowledge we act by is not our own, in these words; *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of GOD who giveth to all Men liberally.* The Jewish Church, the writers of the Old Testament tell us, were taught to believe the same thing: For we find Moses affirming, that *GOD breathed into Man and Man became a living Soul*; i. e. the rational and all other faculties belonging to it, which so ennoble Man as to render him the most excellent of all the Creatures in this lower world, were the gift of GOD: And that wealth and substance also is at GOD's disposal these words sufficiently prove, mention'd in the xxxi Chap. of the Book of Genesis; *For all the riches which GOD hath taken from our Father, that is ours. and our Children's.* But this appears so very plainly, in the iii Chap. of the first Book of Kings. that well worthy of notice are the following words, spoken by GOD himself in a vision to Solomon; *Behold I have done according to thy words: Lo I have given thee a wise and understanding Heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And also I have given unto thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour: So that there shall not be any among the Kings like unto thee all thy days:* Whereunto adds the Psalmist, *He putteth down one and setteth up another.*

And that those, to whom these Mercies are vouchsafed, were expected to look upon them as not their own, but to use them according to the Will of him, to whom they properly belong, is plain from GOD's depriving them of both, when us'd otherwise than as he directed: For the Psalmist assures us in the lxxviii Psalm, that *GOD delivered their Power into Captivity*, when his
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People had applied it to purposes contrary to the Will of the Authour of it; and in the cvi Psalm, *that they that hated them were LORD's over them.* The remarkable Knowledge of Ahithophel likewise we find turn'd into foolishness, in answer to the prayer of Holy David in these words; *And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the Counsel of Abithophel into foolishness.* The destruction of the Jews also, and that of the seven famous Churches in Asia, are a plain proof that the greatest knowledge, Power, or riches are removeable at the pleasure of GOD, that gave any, or all of these mercies. But dayly experience, had we no other, furnisheth us with incontestible proofs of this, even now: For do we not often see riches passing out of the possession of their former Owners in a surprizing manner? Nay sometimes given by the disposer of all hearts to persons who least expected them? have we not also frequent Instances of the loss of knowledge to a surprizing degree, as well as strength of body, thro' age, Accidents, and distempers, in the wise and knowing, in the young and healthful? All which considerations ought sure to convince us that Humane Creatures have nothing which they can properly call their own of all that they possess: neither are any of these at liberty to dispose of their Talents according to their own Will and pleasure otherwise than with the loss of their souls.

But, as so irreparable a loss no prudent person can be suppos'd willing to bring upon himself, it will be well worth your while to hear how so great a Misfortune may be avoided; and, as the Road, leading thereto, consists in a Right use of riches and honour, knowledge and learning, it cannot be improper to shew here what is expected of persons so highly favour'd in this world.

In describing the duty of such as these, lest I should be charg'd with advancing Notions of my own, let GOD speak for himself; and tell you in his own Holy words what he requires of them: For Him sure ye will hear. Says the great Creator of all things, by his servant the Prophet Jeremiah, in these words, mention'd in the ix Chap. of his Prophecy; *Let not the wise man glory in his Wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his Might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me:* And says the same GOD by the mouth of St. Paul to Timothy in these words, written in the vi Chap. of his I Epistle to that faithful servant of his LORD and Master; *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living GOD who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: that they do good, that they be rich in good works; laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life.* Here, ye see, the rich are positively commanded to be rich in good works, to trust in the living GOD, and to value knowing and understanding their duty to him above all other things. And if so, how can they make themselves acquainted with their spiritual Obligation so well as by frequently searching the Oracles of GOD, which contain it? And more especially when they call to mind these words, mention'd in the iii Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy; *All Scripture is given by the inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;* And these contain'd in the same Chap. *The holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto Salvation.* As therefore the holy Scriptures are the fountain of Life, and as these contain

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instructions suitable to all occasions, the rich and great, who have more leisure for this valuable employment than others, whose families depend upon their labour for their support, should be remarkable for their daily perusal of them. These, by having little to interrupt them therein, all opportunities of improvement, and being, generally speaking, persons of considerable capacities, might render themselves mighty in the Scriptures; able to prove from thence, as oft as occasion shall require, that none can be in a state of Salvation who lead Lives contrary to the sacred Rules contain'd therein. These also will hereby soon come to understand how useful they may be in promoting, and encouraging the Cause of GOD; I mean by contending as they ought, i. e. by precept and example, in favour of it. Nay St. John tells us that a Person, properly accounted a lover of GOD, will not fail of going as far as this; and thus extend his love to his Neighbour: For says he, in the iv Chap. of his first general Epistle; *And this Commandment we have from him, that he who loveth GOD, love his Brother also.* The same Apostle says also, in the iii Chap. of the same Epistle, concerning this duty in these words; *In this the Children of GOD are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of GOD, neither he that loveth not his Brother. Whoso hateth his Brother is a murderer; and ye know no murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him.* So that, as GOD expects Obedience in one respect as well as the other, it cannot be sufficient for a Person of plentiful fortune, or great endowments of Mind, to stop at the discharge of those duties, wherein himself only is concern'd; admitting he himself is ever so conversant with the sacred Scriptures, ever so regular in the duties of publick and private Worship, or ever so cautious of acting so as not to offend GOD. Afford-

ding such an example as this to the world is indeed an admirable qualification to set out with towards the other part of his duty, which must be added to this; and indeed without which there is but little prospect of discharging it acceptably. But when Piety is too much confin'd, and unattended with universal Charity for the Souls of others, it is far from being of such a sort as the Gospel requires; is far from coming up to the design of Christianity; is a consideration too selfish for a Christian to content himself with; and affords too plain a proof that he, in whom this only is found, *hath not properly learned Christ*: For every one, who calls to mind how universal the love of his Saviour was, when he, for the sake of putting it in the power of all to arrive at *the knowledge of the Truth*, and thereby to obtain Salvation, suffer'd so grievously as he did, must remember that he best recommends himself to the love of this Saviour, who extends his affection as far as Christ expects he should. But, setting aside this consideration, it is our LORD's positive Command that his Servants, in order to be entitl'd to the advantages procur'd by him, use their best endeavours to promote the encrease of his Kingdom, and therein the salvation of the Souls of as many of their fellow Creatures as possible; and that they spare neither their Pains, nor their Knowledge, their Power, nor their Riches, for so good a purpose; it being as impossible for those, who spend their time, and substance, in Idleness and Vice, or what the world calls innocent Pleasure, ever to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, as it is *for a Camel to go thro' the Eye of a Needle*.

If this then be the case, as, upon searching the Scriptures, every one will find it to be, those of superiour Station and Abilities must resolve to apply their Talents to the uses they were given for; i. e. not only to answer the spiritual, and temporal ends

of themselves and their own houses, but those of others also. In order to this, some of the leisure hours of such as these should be employ'd in considering how they may best do so; which would soon shew them, what great need there is of exerting themselves according to their stations, and circumstances; in regard too. plainly does it appear, that the generality of our Church are in a most deplorable state; I mean on account of the coldness, and lukewarmness in Religious concerns, visibly prevailing among them: For tho' no Church upon Earth can be accounted more excellent, with regard to the doctrine held, and the practise enjoyn'd by it, yet how few among us so much as know what they pretend to believe? And how few act as the Holy Religion they profess teaches them? To revive therefore the decay'd spirit of Christianity, and to put those they wish well to in a way to reap the benefits of their holy profession, some method ought instantly to be us'd; Some steps speedily taken to prevent in time the dreadful effects of their present conduct.

These reflections, as persons of my station are more particularly requir'd to exert themselves in cases of this nature, inclin'd me to pursue those methods of placing my fellow Christians in the Road, leading to eternal life, which I have of late earnestly press'd, and do still recommend the use of; I mean their spending as much time as they can conveniently spare for thoughts of GOD, and Religion; and for this purpose forming themselves into Societies, the better to instruct and encourage each other therein; and which the Rich and Great, the Wise and Knowing, ought to encourage also, unless they can shew whereby the Cause of their Saviour may be better promoted. But as this has been represented as a thing productive of dangerous consequences, and my design therein favouring of Novelty at least, it concerns me to prove that I have not acted, nor advis'd in any thing

thing of this kind, contrary to the directions of the Governours of our Church; nor with any view different to those of the most pious intentions therein. Hear then my manner of vindicating myself in what I have been so much condemn'd for.

In those two great Cities, London and Westminster, according to the account of Dr. Woodward, some religiously dispos'd young Men, before the year 1678, were advis'd by that late worthy Divine, Dr. Horneck, and other pious Ministers, to meet together once every Week; and there to join in praying to GOD, in singing to his glory, and to edify one another. These useful directions they thankfully accepted; and finding the benefit of these religious exercises, they continu'd their meetings till their numbers encreas'd so fast as to alarm the Governours of our Church. These fearing this should produce a Schism, took the trouble of examining particularly into their behaviour at those times, as well as concerning the complaints lodg'd against them. Whereupon, after a careful survey of their proceedings, and a serious reflection upon their intentions, the then Lord Bishop of London, in whose Diocese these meetings were held, was so far from disapproving that he deliver'd himself concerning them in these words; 'GOD forbid that I should be against such excellent designs!' So much also was Dr. Woodward affected with the visible good effects, produc'd by these Societies, that he publish'd an account of the steps taken in this holy work; and this, in order to encourage the same in other places as much as possible: Therein he delivers himself thus; 'I cannot but recommend Christian Society with the greatest earnestness to all sorts of Men; For these must be as useful means of recommending the practise of Religion and the reformation of Men's manners, promoted and encourag'd by Magistrates
' and

‘ and Ministers, as Companies and Societies of Artists
 ‘ and Tradesmen are found serviceable in advancing
 ‘ their Arts and Interests by a multitude of Heads
 ‘ and Hands.’

These Societies appearing from the confession of the late learned and pious Dr. Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, who, upon examining their Orders, the objections against, and the answer made to them, declar’d it as his opinion, and that publickly, and upon several occasions, that these Societies were a support to our Church; from the confession also of the Governour of that part of it in those two great Cities, London and Westminster, as well as of several other Divines: I say these Societies appearing to be so useful to Religion, from the acknowledgement and approbation of such unquestionable Judges, soon encourag’d the setting up of more: Among which we find a Minister in Kent declaring in a publick manner how useful these had been to his Parish in particular in the year 1700: For he tells us that, from a dissolute and irreligious People, the Inhabitants of it were thereby brought to a regular practice of their Religious duty. The way he chose to bring about this great and good work, consisted in teaching at first only three or four young Men to sing Psalms. To these others soon desiring to be added, the number encreas’d so far, all being willing to be advis’d, that, by forming Societies among them, and instructing therein the Members of them from time to time, his end became effectually answer’d; whose account whereof concludes with these words; ‘ And, to the joy of all pious Souls, our
 ‘ Shepherds, Plowmen, and other labourers, at their
 ‘ work, perfume the air with the melodious singing
 ‘ of Psalms, to the praise of the great Creator, Redeemer, and sanctifier of Men.’

But this valuable method of reviving decay’d Piety was not confin’d to this Kingdom only, tho’

it extended itself to many parts of it, and increas'd so much in London as to produce no less than forty societies of this kind, exclusive of near twenty more, set up on purpose to carry on prosecutions against the loose and disorderly; and which they were assisted in by that Prelate of glorious memory, Bishop Stillingfleet, once Lord Bishop of this Diocese, as well as by the then Lord Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Horneck, Dr. Jekill, the Reverend Mr. Edward Stephens, and others: I say this was not confin'd to this Kingdom only: For in Ireland the Lord Arch-Bishop of Dublin, not only encourag'd these societies in his Diocese, but sign'd his approbation of the Rules and orders thereof; which were drawn from those of London. A letter, written by Dr. Frank, Professor of Divinity in Saxony, in the year 1700, discovers also, that the account of these societies in England had reach'd Germany; and that it encourag'd the use of them therein. From another, sent to London in the same year from Switzerland, it appears likewise that the same were set up among the Inhabitants of that Country. In many more places in foreign Nations, in Ireland, as well as in this, this useful step has been taken, with a design of thereby encreasing our LORD's Kingdom. But, as those, already mention'd, are more than sufficient to prove the expediency, as well as agreeableness thereof to the doctrine and Rules of our Church, I need add no more at present.

That others, since the time of those already nam'd, have declar'd their approbation, and given their Opinion of the usefulness of such societies, will appear to all that think fit to peruse a book written by Mr. Nelson; much approv'd of by the Members of our Church, and known by the Title of his Festivals and Fasts. In the Preface to this he says enough to satisfy any one concerning this matter;

matter; and answers also the Objection made to it from two Canons of our Church; which he rightly observes were never intended to discourage societies of this kind. The same will also further appear from another work of the same Authour, Entitl'd the Life of Bishop Bull. In this, among other directions, drawn up by that Bishop, and intended to have been deliver'd in charge to his Clergy at the ensuing Visitation, he recommends these Societies, and the method taken by the Members of them, to the practise of the Clergy and Magistracy of his Diocese. But in that treatise of his, Entitl'd an Address to Persons of Quality, he comes up to the advice I have afforded, to those committed to my Care, in the fullest manner I could have desir'd: For he recommends these Societies, as the only likely means of recovering the Members of this Church from the disease of Luke-warmness and Indifference, now too sadly spreading itself among them; requesting the Nobility and Gentry to engage heartily in so glorious an undertaking. The argument used therein to convince them of the success, which their endeavours could not but be attended with, and which indeed to me is unanswerable, stands thus. If the labours of a few Ministers, and People of so low rank as to be scarcely known, have effected wonders in the work of Religion, by meeting together to pray to GOD, to sing to his glory, and to edify and strengthen one another, (as it can be prov'd they have) how much more useful might the appearance of such as these, in favour thereof, be to so good a Cause? The weight and Authority, such as these have in their respective Neighbourhoods, would compel Mankind in general, as it were, to come together upon such occasions. And tho' the hearts of these, so assembl'd, might not at first be so right before GOD as they ought to be, yet soon might they be render'd so broken, and contrite, as not to be

be despis'd by that Gracious GOD, who *willeth not the death of a sinner, but had rather he would repent and live.*

This desirable work I have, according to the duty of my station, entred upon; and (Blessed be GOD) have met with some success therein. But, as far greater would be the effect of my endeavours, if joyn'd by those of Fortune and Capacity among us, I call upon these to help me in this our great LORD's business; and which will be best promoted by their seasonable example, counsel, and assistance; this being, in my Opinion, the duty of these towards the souls of their fellow Christians; nay full as much as it is a part of their Christian obligation to be liberal, in contributing towards their relief in their temporal necessities: For as the soul is the better part of man, so the care of it ought to be chiefly regarded. Consequently, if no man can be said to love GOD, as he ought, without loving his Neighbour also, as, if the word of GOD be true, he cannot, this sort of love, I mean being assisting towards the salvation of his soul, must be preferable to all other. And therefore he, that is deficient herein, is deficient in the Principal Point; therein disobedient to the positive command of his Saviour; and, as such, lyable to the Vengeance of eternal fire. So that, as this is not a matter of small moment, so trifling a consideration as to be unworthy of Notice, or a thing which may be safely omitted; let not those of Ability in this place presume to put off, look contemptuously upon, or account improper, or unnecessary, what Arch-Bishops and Bishops, what Divines remarkable for Piety and Learning, and what the Layety of no mean Rank, as well as such Numbers of different stations, invite them to join with me in. Rather let these readily and willingly comply with what they should

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have consented to long ago; this being the way to gain admission among those, who, by being thus instrumental in *turning many to Righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.*

Thus much may be said concerning the duty of the rich and great in a spiritual respect. But, over and above the indispensable obligation before-mention'd, there is a further care, incumbent upon these to render them acceptable to GOD, which consists in shewing mercy to their Inferiours, with regard to their bodily wants; and which I must say something of before I end my observations upon this subject.

Now that this is a duty as strictly enjoyn'd also, this being intended as a proof to the world that they, in whom this mark of affection is found, do really love their brethren according to the Commandment, I prove from the words of GOD, recorded in the New Testament. Says our LORD, after setting forth how inexcusable want of mercy to those in necessity renders all, that are without bowels of compassion to their Indigent Brethren; *inasmuch as ye fed not my Hungry Members, gave not drink to those that were thirsy, took not in those that were strangers, cloathed not those that were naked, visited not those that were sick or in prison,* I account these refusals as offer'd to myself in my own person; and therefore, as such justly deserve this dreadful sentence, they shall, to their inexpressible terrour, hear it pronounc'd to them in these words; *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.* A plain proof this, that there is no escaping endless misery, and therefore no possibility of future Glory, without acts of mercy to CHRIST's poor Members; i. e. by relieving them according to their wants and our own Circumstances: For barely to Simpathize with those in distress, admit-ting

ting our concern for them to be ever so great, is far from coming up to what our Lord expects in this case; and which, lest this should be accounted sufficient, St. James declares the insufficiency of in the ii Chap. of his general Epistle in these words; *If a Brother or a Sister be naked, and destitute of dayly food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warm, be ye filled:* (i. e. I am sorry for the distresses ye are in, and wish ye had sufficient food and raiment) *Notwithstanding ye give them not what is needful for the Body, what doth it profit?* Various other passages might be cited out of the Old and New Testament, both which abound with them, for the confirmation of this doctrine; but, as those, already cited, are sufficient to put this matter out of dispute, I need make no further addition of this sort; but rather describe particularly in what manner this duty of shewing mercy, or discovering our affection to the bodies of our fellow Christians, may best be perform'd in this age and Nation.

As those of plentiful fortune have the charge of the poor committed to them by the laws of GOD and Man, and both are very positive in commanding that a proper care be taken of them, these must be inexcusable in pinching, and screwing up the Poor of their respective Parishes to such scanty allowances as are insufficient for their support; keeping the payments low, and having thereby the more to spend upon their Vices, or to hoard up in their Coffers, being the worst of all reasons for such cruelty; and such as must sound dreadfully in the ears of those, who remember what their LORD and his Apostles say in this case.

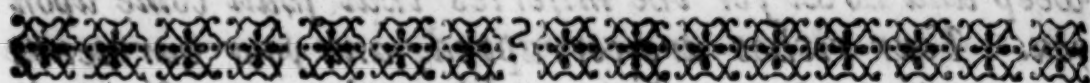
But still more do such *treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath*, who have houses to employ their Poor in, and either provide not properly for them therein, or are instrumental in having them cruelly, or unkindly us'd, when there; these

thus making those places a terrour to them, that they may consent to accept of less assistance than their necessities require, rather than be brought to them. It therefore concerns the rich to see that all opposers of the distressed, in cases of this Nature, be answer'd, so as to convince them of their mistake, if possible; however that the Poor are provided for according to their wants. But then, as there are many other objects of compassion, and accidents are continually befalling one or other, so I mean as to lay them under a necessity of applying to those in Ability for redress in their several grievances, the rich must remember that their liberality is to be extended to these also: Neither will the usual plea of providing for those of their own houses, or that they can't afford to be liberal upon these occasions, be admitted with GOD, as any excuse for withholding what ought readily to be given at such times: For these are a part of their own houses. These are part of CHRIST's own family. These have a right to the assistance here recommended; and such a right as must not be oppos'd. What else then have the rich to do but to contract their expences; to live more frugally; and to eat, drink, and wear, less expensively, *that they may have* without hurting their families, *to give to him that needeth?* For, unless they do so, let who will Prophecy to them smoother things than these, it will avail them nothing: Neither will their being told by *blind leaders of the blind* that I have carried this duty too far; that less than I have set forth in this discourse will be accepted of such, prove any thing but this; i. e. that either the person misinforming them is ignorant of what he ought to know, or willing to please them for the sake of some temporal advantage. But how dangerous a thing dependance upon any such ill advice must be, I leave the sacred Writers to tell you; and in particular St. James in these words; *Go to now ye rich Men*

weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and your silver is canker'd: And the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat up your flesh as it were fire: Ye have heaped up treasure for the last days.



POSTSCRIPT



P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE the printing of several of these discourses Mr. Bunyan's Treatise on the Covenants being put into my hands by an Israelite indeed, in whom (I think) there is no guile, in order to prevent its having any ill effect upon him, or any other of his good disposition, I thought proper to add the following Remarks upon it.

MR. Bunyan says in many places of this Treatise that all, who are not in a justified state, are under the Law, i. e. the Covenant of Works, because these St. Paul's words, in the iii Chap. of his Epistle to the Romans, *To them that are under the Law*, and such like in other places, in his opinion say so. But St. Paul means not by those words that all are under the Covenant of Works, as they were at first when that Covenant was made with Mankind in Adam; but that those only are so who refuse to comply with the Conditions, and to accept the offer of the second Covenant; the force of the first ceasing when the second took place; and therefore Mankind from that time became discharg'd from their obligation of unfinning Obedience requir'd by the Covenant of works. So that it is one thing to be under the Law in St. Paul's sense to the Jewish Church, i. e. to be under the first Covenant thro' an obstinate refusal of the Covenant of Grace, as the unbelieving part of the Jewish Church was, and another to be under the Law, or Covenant of works, i. e. oblig'd to yeild unfinning Obedience.

That St. Paul meant no more than the first of these remarks in his advice to the Jewish Church appears

appears from the cause of his thus arguing in this Epistle; but still more plainly in his Epistle to the Galatians: For he says in the iv Chap. in these words; *Ye that desire to be under the Law*; i. e. those he was writing to, instead of placing themselves under the shadow of the merciful wings of the second Covenant, and of believing in CHRIST as the Authour of their salvation, as they had power to do, chose to depend upon their obedience to the Law; which St. Paul assur'd them could be attended with nothing but Condemnation; and that because nothing but compleat Obedience could entitle any to the promise made in the Law or Covenant of works; which as none of them ever did, or could yeild, no advantage could arise from thence: And therefore the Apostle labour'd to shew them how greatly they err'd in depending upon what could be of no use to them: For, as there are no more Covenants made with Mankind than the first and second, if those, for the benefit of whom the second was made, would unadvisedly reject the Covenant of Grace, and prefer the Covenant of works before it, they must bear the effect of so imprudent a Choice, i. e. eternal condemnation. But then the ignorance or obstinacy of part of the Jewish Church, in desiring what would be so much to their hurt, could not set aside GOD's gracious goodness in the holding out of the second Covenant to those it was design'd for the benefit of; neither can their rejecting the second Covenant prove that they themselves were not under the second Covenant; i. e. had not the offer of it, and were under no obligation of acting so as to comply with the Conditions of any other: For it is not true that the Jewish Church were under the Law in Mr. Bunyan's sense any more than others are at any other time; but that those of it only were so, whose obstinacy put them upon rejecting the second Covenant, or those also, whose future

future obstinacy should incline them to imitate their example. On the contrary all Mankind were, and still are, under the second Covenant, or Covenant of Grace, and not under the Law, or Covenant of works, long before St. Paul's time; and which Mr. Bunyan himself acknowledges, tho' not in the same terms, in these words, p. 95; 'For tho' the new Covenant was made before the World began, and also every one in all ages was saved by the vertue of the second Covenant;' to which he should have added, and the power, whereby they became capable of acting so as to please GOD thro' repentance, sincere endeavours of Obedience, and dependance upon GOD's mercy for what they were deficient, or had offended in; they were favoured with by virtue of the second Covenant: For those before Abraham's time could not be brought into a justified state either by the rites of Circumcision, or Baptism, so as thereby to be brought under the second Covenant: So that, as Mr. Bunyan allows that Mankind, from Adam to CHRIST, were under the second Covenant in the words before mention'd, he is inconsistent with himself in saying that all are under the Law, i. e. are under the same obligation; and consequently condemnation for want of complying with the Covenant of works, as Adam himself was from the time of his Creation to the time of his fall. It therefore cannot be said that that part of Mankind, who have no right to the title of Believers, are under the first Covenant, or the Law, tho' they have no benefit from the second Covenant, notwithstanding what Mr. Bunyan has said to prove it. So far from this that the contrary manifestly appears to be the Christian doctrine, as well as that Mr. Bunyan, in endeavouring to establish this mistaken Notion, has plainly contradicted himself; which shews that no notice ought to be taken of what he says in this respect.

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Instead therefore of saying what he has concerning this matter, Mr. Bunyan should have said thus; Many good Men have long been, and are still at a loss concerning the preparatory means, or first act of Divine goodness to fallen Man, whereby they are render'd capable of applying to GOD for the renovation of their corrupt Nature in the work of Regeneration; all these affirming that every Man is in the state Adam himself was in at the time of his fall till the time of his Regeneration, and therefore that they need irresistible Grace to bring them out of it; to prove which they observe that the will of Man is wholly passive, i. e. unable to choose any thing tending to his good or to avoid what tends to his destruction, till the time of Regeneration. But here lies their mistake. Tho' the will of Man be wholly passive till the loss, sustain'd by his fall, is repair'd, yet this reparation is not delay'd till the time of Regeneration, as will appear from stating the Case of the unregenerate in the following manner; which, impartially weigh'd and consider'd, would produce also another truly valuable effect, I mean the reconciling of two well meaning Protestant parties, who have long contended concerning this doctrine.

Every Man it may be allow'd is at his first coming into the world in the same state as Adam himself was in at the time of his fall; I mean with regard to the ill effects of original Sin, consisting not only in meriting eternal Condemnation as the just reward of his disobedience to the command of GOD in his first Parents who represented him, but in having the same corrupt Nature, which inclines him to evil, and renders him averse to all good; this being sufficiently prov'd by these words of St. Paul, Eph. ii. 3. *And were by Nature the Children of Wrath*; and the e, Rom. viii. 7. and 8; *The Carnal mind is enmity against GOD: For it is not subject to the Law of GOD, nor indeed can be. So then they that are*
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in the flesh cannot please GOD; that the same state he still remains in till the perverse disposition of his will becomes rectified by Divine Grace; and that during this whole time, his will is wholly passive. But then this inability to act for his own good cannot be said to remain till the will becomes renew'd in the work of Regeneration: For the advantage arising from our Redemption begins sooner; the merits of CHRIST having procur'd such a reparation of the will as consists in the conferring upon it some spiritual Power, (such I mean as enables every Man to hear, read, and pray, the way of coming to GOD for greater,) as soon as he is of an age capable of understanding the advantage belonging to this power; and therefore we find Persons applied to in all ages as such. This the Preachers in the Old world did to those in their time. The same did the Prophets and pious Men to the Proselytes of the Jewish Church. And the like may be observ'd of CHRIST and his Apostles; these bidding Men repent, believe the Gospel, and ask, in order to receive. But, as none of all these could have acted as they were advis'd, without power to take the advice given them, it follows that those, who acted according to the directions afforded them, must have had power to do so; which, as natural power was insufficient for this purpose, must be spiritual Power: And as there is no more rational, or spiritual way of accounting for this power, why may it not be allow'd, that the will of every Man is so far rectified before Regeneration as to receive thereby both inclination and ability to hear, read and pray; a proper use of which spiritual power, or beginnings of Divine Grace, consisting in the exercise of Faith and repentance according to the directions of holy Scripture, will bring those, so using it, to those greater degrees thereof, the effect of Regeneration? In objection to this perhaps it will be urg'd that this is putting the Heathen world upon

upon a level with those that are taken into Covenant with God. But this cannot be: For, tho' the will of those of the Heathen world is rectified alike with that of those taken into Covenant with God, and both may reap such benefit from the first fruits of their Redemption as a proper use of this mercy cannot fail of bringing to them, yet is there a wide difference between both grown Persons and Infants of Heathen and those of converted Nations: For instead of having those great degrees of Divine Grace, the effect of Regeneration by Circumcision, or Baptism in Infancy, which flow in upon all such at years of discretion, and which continue with all such till they deprive themselves of them thro' habitual Sin, those of Heathen Nations have only the spiritual power, or beginnings of Divine Grace, before-mention'd; which only so repair the deprav'd will as to dispose, or render those thus far Divinely assisted, capable of good advice, and of applying to God for greater: Neither is it revealed to any of these how great things God has done for them, any more than they may boast of being visibly taken into Covenant with God, and received as his Children: In this manner I say Mr. Bunyan should have stated the case of those which St. Paul says are under the Law; to which he might have added, that all who omit making themselves parties in the second Covenant, or wilfully reject the opportunity they have of doing so, are under the condemning sentence of the Law, and consequently can have no more benefit from the second Covenant than if there were no such Covenant, but not that these are under the Law, or covenant of works; the rectifying of their will (the first fruits of their Redemption, or advantage arising from the second Covenant,) being a manifest proof that all these are under Grace, i. e. the second Covenant; and that they may proceed from this beginning to the securing of all the benefits belonging to it.

After the description of the Covenants Mr. Bunyan should have set forth the conditions of the second Covenant performable on the part of the Redeemed; and which he might as well have plainly acknowledg'd as he in effect does in the latter part of his Treatise in an obscure manner: For his intention of supporting his supposition, viz. that there are no Conditions performable on the part of the Redeemed, previous to Justification, he destroys in several parts of it; particularly in his Preface, in the 5 and 6, the 7 8 and 9, the 250 and 51, and other passages near the end of it; wherein he prescribes the same means of obtaining justification, (i. e. the exercise of Faith, sorrow for sin, and prayer, and that in much stronger terms,) as I have prescrib'd in my Exposition of the Church Catechism; All the difference between his advice, and mine consisting in our manner of expressing ourselves. He calls the means he prescribes, the way of laying hold of, or applying CHRIST, And I call the means I prescribe, Conditions performable on the part of the Redeemed; but as the means, prescribed by us both, are Faith, Repentance, and Prayer, and we both agree that justification cannot be had without the use of these, previous thereto, we both agree in effect, tho' we differ in words; which is no difference at all. 'Tis true, Mr. Bunyan says there are no Conditions performable on the part of the Redeemed, previous to justification, in one place; but then he tells all such in many more what they must do in order to it, and of their own accord too, without waiting to be forc'd, or compell'd to it; Nay that all may choose or refuse Salvation; and that Faith, sorrow for sin, and prayer must not be omitted by those who would come to CHRIST.

He says also that neither Faith, nor any other means, procures justification. The same every one says who understands the doctrine of Justification; this being procur'd by the merits of CHRIST only. But if
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this assertion be urg'd in proof of his believing and affirming that Faith, sorrow for sin, and prayer, are not to be us'd as means in order to obtain it, i. e. that the use of these means of obtaining it is not the behaviour of the expectants of this mercy, and which they cannot have without it, what he says in the pages beforemention'd, and many more, must be look'd upon as words without any meaning.

Having thus shewn that Mr. Bunyan was mistaken concerning the nature of the second Covenant before Justification, I now proceed to shew that he is no less concerning the nature of it after Justification. The first proof of this are these his own words, Page the 68; 'Now the Principle is this, not to do things because we would be sav'd, but because we really believe we are, and shall be sav'd; to which he adds, by way of explanation, that he, who looks for life, because he does good duties, is under the Law, or Covenant of works;' his meaning wherein is this, viz: As he before affirm'd that there are no conditions for the Candidate for Justification, previous to it, so he now affirms that there are no conditions requir'd of the Justified, in order to Salvation, after Justification. But as he was aware of a question, which would be put to him concerning the behaviour of a justified Person after Justification, (i. e. whether such a one is not oblig'd to keep GOD's Commandments?) and not being able to deny that such a one ought to lead an holy and Religious Life, he answers this question by saying, that he, who looks for life because he does good duties, is under the Law or Covenant of Works. This remark I have already shewn the weakness of, and therefore need say no more of it; but rather make answer to this false assertion, viz. that a justified Person is not to do things because he would be sav'd, but, because he really believes he is and shall be sav'd. And this I do by pronouncing this assertion contrary to reason and holy scripture: For not
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to be permitted to desire our own happiness is contrary to reason; Nay, were this desire taken away, no step would be taken towards it; neither would the advice afforded in holy scripture be of any use; the threats and invitations contain'd wherein ceasing to become motives to Piety, or to avoid evil actions, without this desire. And so far from being forbidden by Holy Scripture is doing things thro' a desire of Salvation that the use of the means of Grace is propos'd in holy scripture to answer that desire, both before and after justification; Nay those are therein pronounc'd fools, and their actions foolishness, who discover not that they act with this view; the end propos'd by rewards and threats being to excite a desire to act so as to obtain the rewards, and to avoid the threatned punishment. But, as this will appear more plainly by shewing what obligations the justified are under after their Acceptance with GOD, I need not be more particular concerning the first part of this false assertion; viz: that we must not do things because we would be fav'd: And as the shewing what obligations the justified are under will best set forth the weakness, as well as falsity of the latter part of it, viz that we are to do things because we really believe we are, and shall be fav'd, I shall now describe those obligations.

As Faith and repentance are requir'd of all before their acceptance with GOD, so is a proper use of the spiritual power, granted as the effect of justification, consisting in sincere endeavours of Obedience to the Divine Law, or the commands of GOD necessary to Salvation: For tho' GOD insisteth not on unfinning Obedience in the second Covenant, yet does he insist on sincere endeavours of Obedience from every one, to whom he imparteth such spiritual power as is sufficient to enable him to yeild this kind of Obedience, term'd

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Gospel Obedience. And that it is highly reasonable, in point of gratitude as well as duty, that GOD should insist on this kind of Obedience, will appear from considering that those, from whom this is expected, are enabl'd by spiritual power, vouchsafed for this purpose, as much to yeild this as Adam himself was favour'd with power to yeild the Obedience requir'd in the first Covenant; and also that hereby the justice of GOD becomes effectually secur'd in condemning obstinate finners; these being unable to plead want of power to comply with the Divine Will. On the contrary GOD may justly say to the disobedient under this Covenant since the coming of CHRIST, as he might to such under the same before the coming of CHRIST; Thy Condemnation is of thyself O Israel. The Law therefore, or commands of GOD, are still as much a rule for Mankind to walk by, and always will, as when they were first given, only with this difference; viz: The Obedience requir'd of those under the second Covenant is not unfinning Obedience, as in time past, but Gospel Obedience; i. e. sincere endeavours of Obedience, attended with Faith in CHRIST's perfect Obedience to render perfect our imperfect Obedience, without which those under the second Covenant are no more entitl'd to the promises of it, than those under the first were to the promises of that without unfinning Obedience.

This as the Parables of the Talents (mention'd Matthew xxv. and Luke xix.) are sufficient to prove, I shall content myself with what these say concerning it.. In the Parable mention'd by St. Luke, our LORD shews that every one is expected to make a proper use of the spiritual power vouchsafed him; nay that such as do so will be rewarded with degrees of Glory in Heaven in proportion to the use of their spiritual power, consisting in
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greater or less endeavours of Obedience in those that exercise them; this being represented by those Servants having Authority over five, and ten Cities, whose different use of their single Pounds had gain'd five Pounds, and ten Pounds. And that every one is expected to use his spiritual power according to the degrees of it in sincere endeavours of Obedience, or to suffer punishment for not doing so, appears from the Parable mention'd by St. Matthew; this being represented by the different number of Talents given to different Persons, and by the casting of the unprofitable Servant into outer darkness.

There is indeed one objection rais'd by the Advocates for the Antinomian Scheme against this stating of the Case of the Justified, but is of no force; as will appear from the Question and the answer to it. These say, if this be the case with the Justified, and their Salvation depends upon these endeavours of Obedience, how can Justification be an assurance of Salvation to those that are favour'd with this mercy? An answer to this question may be given thus. This mercy is an assurance of the remission of all sin and acceptance with God; and would doubtless convey all, that are favour'd with it, to Salvation, were they to be remov'd out of the world by death at that time. So that Justification is attended with full as valuable effects as these contend for so far as this. But, if the justified are permitted to live longer, as they generally, or however often are, their Salvation afterwards depends upon the use they make of their spiritual power; these receiving rewards in proportion to their greater or less endeavours of Obedience, and being punishable with greater or less damnation in proportion to their abuse of the spiritual power vouchsafed them. It therefore plainly appears from hence that to call these endeavours of Obedience, (which is Gospel Obedience, and requir'd of all Christians,) acting

ing by a legal Spirit and being under the Law, is only shewing the ignorance of those that assert so manifest a falsity, and that they understand not the Nature of the Christian Covenant.

But this is not the only mistake of such as these: for Mr. Bunyan, and those of his Party, contend as earnestly for the impossibility of final falling in those that are justified. To prove this Mr. Bunyan observes that God's love to the Justified is an everlasting love; that God is unchangeable; and that his promises are sure. All this I grant. But this is no proof that those shall have the benefit of his promises, who have no right to them; such I mean as the promises are not made to; i. e. those that draw back, continue not to the end, and abide not in the Vine. For it is not true that, as God hath begun to love the Justified, he hath promised so to continue it to the end as to render it impossible that these should fall finally; no such thing being implied in the terms unchangeable, and everlasting: For these terms are applicable to the Christian Covenant no otherwise than in the following manner; i. e. to oblige God to stand to, or not recede from the Conditions of it on his own part, which consists in letting all it is offer'd to, or that are admitted as Parties in it, reap the benefit promised therein upon the terms propos'd. But, as final perseverance, exclusive of a proper use of spiritual power in the Justified, is no part of this Covenant, no advantage can arise to the Advocates for this doctrine from the terms before-mention'd. So far from this that the term unchangeable, applied to God, makes against them; in that, if this doctrine be admitted, God would be changeable in allowing now what he allowed not in time past in his holy word, when that proceeded from him. That this doctrine is contrary to his holy word will appear from our LORD's own stating this case in the Parable of the wise and foolish Virgins: For he therein tells us

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that the Lamps of both continu'd burning alike, because kept burning by the same means; but that those of the foolish, as they had spent the Oyl they were supplied with by burning till their Owners were weary of waiting, and fell asleep, at last went out; i. e. Divine Grace, whereby any are render'd capable of acting in CHRIST'S Kingdom upon Earth so as to be fit for his Kingdom in Heaven, if not us'd properly, but neglected and disregarded, will totally cease, the consequence of which appears from the answer to the foolish Virgins, knocking at the door, in these words; *verily, verily, I say unto you, I know you not.* This is also further prov'd in the last verse of the Chap. containing this Parable in these words; *Watch therefore for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.* And these also spoken with the same view mention'd in the xiii Chap. of St. Mark's Gospel: *What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch.* And that this Parable relates to Justified Persons appears from the like expression in the xii Chap. of St. Luke's Gospel, in which are these words; *Let your Loins be girded about, and your lights burning, that when the LORD cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately:* For no other than such only can be said to have their Loins girded, and their Lamps burning, so as to be ready to open the door when their LORD knocketh, in the sense which these words are to be taken in; i. e. to be ready to make their appearance in another world when their LORD calleth upon them by Death for that purpose. But, lest his other remarks should not be sufficient to establish this false Notion, Mr. Bunyan adds all the verses from the 26 to the 37 of the 89 Psalm in proof of it; which the Prophecy, contain'd in them, is so far from proving that it is a Prophecy of mercy to the Jewish Church alone; and that either in delivering them from their Babylonian Captivity, or

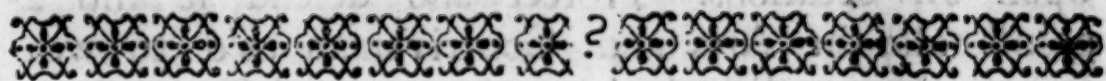
rather

rather in the calling of them to Christianity, after their Iniquity hath been visited with the Rod, and their Sin with scourges in the expulsion of them for many ages from their Native Land: And the everlasting love, which Mr. Bunyan mentions, is an expression taken out of Jer. xxxi. 3, and a Prophecy of the like goodness of God to the same People. So that, as Mr. Bunyan understood not the meaning of the Psalm, nor the Chap. of Jeremiah beforemention'd, all his reasonings from those Prophecies is nothing to the purpose which he uses it for, any more than that from either of the like kind, cited by him with the same view.

Another intended proof of final perseverance is drawn by Mr. Bunyan, from a misapprehension of the honour due to the Justified, in their being said to partake of the Divine Nature. But what he says, in pages the 194 &c. concerning the Change of the Nature of sanctified Persons, is not only a presumptuous and vain imagination, if taken in such a sense as to make humane Nature Divine, but seems to have given rise to the blasphemous Notions which many in this Country run away with; I mean that justified Persons are no longer of an humane, but have a Divine Nature; and which I have sufficiently answer'd in the 111 and 12 pages of my Exposition of the Church Catechism. I have also prov'd in the 88 and 9 pages that what Mr. Bunyan says concerning our Lord's Soul suffering the torments of Hell in Pages the 115 &c, is a mistake of his.

Mr. Bunyan says, page 257, that the Devil deceiveth Souls by the working of his Spirit in them, pretending that it is the spirit of God. An excellent and very just remark this! This way hath this subtil Spirit deceived many a good Man; sometimes perswading these that, as such doctrines, as he recommends, are held by very pious Men, they must be true; sometimes that as their Parents in time past, and

many of their intimate acquaintance, held such doctrines, and do still, they should not dishonour them by endeavouring to shew that they were, and are mistaken; and sometimes that such doctrines, as he would have them hold, tend to raise their reputation in the world; i. e. to have it thought that they are Persons who can see further than others. Thus, and by various other means, does this enemy transform himself into an Angel of light; knowing that, tho' error in sincere Christians is not a damnable sin, the disputes, hereby occasion'd, may greatly injure the practical part of Religion; i. e. by having the time of the Religious taken up in disputes, (productive at least of Anger and Opposition, if not worse consequences,) which should be spent in Piety and Holiness. To prevent therefore this deceit of Satan, let every Christian use fervent Prayer to GOD, before he takes into his hand any book of Controversy, for power to lay aside all prejudice and partiality; weigh seriously and consider, beseeching GOD to open his understanding also, the doctrine he would be set right in; and more especially the writings of the Antinomians, whose doctrines are so contrary to the written Word; and by which so many well meaning Persons in this Country are misled. Be it remembered also that Mr. Bunyan, (tho' I believe he was a good Man) was a thorough Antinomian, as appears by his Treatise on the Covenants; which therefore ought to be read with Caution on account of the many mistakes that are in it; and which I have prov'd in these remarks, as well as in my Sermons upon Predestination and Election, to be contrary to Reason and the holy Scriptures.



A P R A Y E R to be us'd at the beginning of their Religious service in a society of Christians.

O Almighty and most glorious G O D! Thou Creator of Heaven and earth, and of all things therein! Thou Protector and Preserver of all Created Beings! Thou Restorer of fallen Man to the power of working out their Salvation! Look down from thy sacred Habitation with an eye of Pity and Compassion upon the Workmanship of Thine own hands, miserable Mankind now lying in wickedness. Find out ways of turning them from darkness to light, that all the Kingdoms of the Earth may be the Kingdoms of the L O R D C H R I S T; and so bring them home, Blessed L O R D, by Thy Divine Power, that they may all, in unity of Christian Worship, become one sheepfold under one Shepherd, C H R I S T J E S U S.

But more especially do we beseech thee to be gracious to the Christian Church; howsoever distressed, or wheresoever dispers'd throughout the whole world. Purge it by Thy Grace from all Heresy, and false doctrine. Incline it thereby to delight in adoring, blessing, and praising the glorious Trinity in Unity. And enable it to do so in such a manner as is well pleasing to the one ever-living and true G O D. Take away from it all envy and hatred, all Malice and uncharitableness. Fill every Member of it with the true spirit of Christianity; so real, and sincere a love for Thee, as may discover itself in their seeking first Thy Kingdom, and its Righteousness; and so united an affection for each other, as may appear
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in a readiness to be as helpful to them as possible upon all occasions. Protect and defend it also against all the Arts and Contrivances us'd to weaken it, or to disturb its quiet; and suffer not the gates of Hell ever to prevail against it.

And as we thus pray for CHRIST's holy Catholick Church, so do we no less for the Peace and Prosperity of that part of it in these Nations, to which we belong. Grant that all of the Protestant Name may speedily Unite, both in doctrine and Worship; the better to oppose the great Antichrist, their Common Enemy; in order to render their Religious services as agreeable as possible to Thee, their Common Father; and that our Church may thereby become a Praise in the Earth. To this end we beseech thee to pour the continual Dew of Thy Blessing upon its supreme Governour, our gracious sovereign King George; all the Royal Family; and all in Authority under him. Powerfully also be pleas'd to influence the Bishops, and Pastors of it. Incline, and enable all these to become burning and shining lights. Move them to be earnest, and zealous in setting forth the necessity of inward holiness in all Christians; the Insufficiency of Profession without practice; and how serviceable shewing their Faith by their works would be to the Christian Cause. Be particularly gracious likewise to our own Minister. Enable him, by the help of Thy holy spirit, to be exemplary in his life, and conversation; to deliver Thy word with power at all times; and to go thro' every part of his sacred employment acceptably to Thee, with comfort to himself, and to the Edification, and satisfaction of those, whom he is appointed to instruct. And that all committed to the charge of the Pastors of Thy Church, may believe, and act in Obedience to Thy sacred Word, and Will, vouchsafe to be present with them, by thy
Holy

Holy spirit, at all times. Break thou the stony heart of every unregenerate Member thereof. Move every one of these to address the Throne of Grace with the tears of true, and unfeign'd repentance; to confess before thee, with all lowliness and humility, that his sins are so many, and so great, that he deserves nothing but eternal Condemnation; to cry mightily to thee for deliverance out of the miserable state sin has brought him into; and to continue his Petitioning penitence till Thy gracious ear is turned towards him. Incline him likewise to believe that the blood of his Saviour only can cleanse, and wash away the sinful stains of his polluted soul; that his merits and Righteousness only can procure his acceptance with Thee; and that justifying Faith is the effect of thy Free Grace; arising not through any merit of his own, but is the Gift of Thee, his Merciful and Gracious G O D. Vouchsafe also to all Expectants thereof patience to wait contentedly for that inestimable Mercy, the inward witness of their justification; and continue to all that are already, or shall hereafter be favour'd with the full assurance of their acceptance with Thee, plentiful effusions of Thy Holy Spirit; such as may be sufficient to keep constantly burning the Holy fire kindled within them; and such as may move them to proceed from one degree of Grace to another, till they arrive at as great perfection as Thou expectest to find in them. Thy compassionate tenderness also do we petition for in favour of all, that are afflicted in mind, body, or estate; but more especially of all, that are persecuted for Righteousness sake. Protect them from the open, and secret designs of all their enemies; support and comfort them in their several Tryals, and difficulties; and in Thy due time deliver them from all their trouble.

With a favourable eye likewise do we beseech Thee to behold Thy poor unworthy Servants, now kneeling

kneeling before thy footstool; now confessing, with humble, and penitent hearts, that we have grievously offended Thy Divine Majesty, not only by neglecting what we ought by no means to have omitted, but by doing what we knew to be displeasing to Thee; and that we therefore deserve to have the full Viols of Thy wrath poured out upon us to consume us. But, as Thou hast graciously promised pardon to all, that implore Thy goodness in the name of the Blessed JESUS, we presume to entreat Thy forgiving Mercy for the sake of this Saviour. Let his precious Blood atone for our many, and grievous transgressions; his Merits and Righteousness procure our acceptance with Thee; and Thy holy Spirit enable us to persevere in Piety to our lives end.

Finally, O Gracious LORD, be pleas'd to accept our most submissive thanks, and Praise, for Thy goodness in Creating, Redeeming, and preserving us; and also for Thy manifold, and great mercies, from time to time vouchsafed to us; beseeching thee to add to us, Thy whole Church, and all Mankind, whatever more than we have now pray'd for, shall seem meet to Thine Infinite Wisdom, for the sake of Thy dearly beloved Son JESUS CHRIST; in whose most Blessed Name, and perfect form of words, we further call upon Thee, saying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

14 JY 60

With a favourable eye likewise do we behold
 like to behold Thy poor unworthy servants, now
 kneeling



A P R A Y E R to be us'd immediately before the end of their Religious Service in a Society of Christians.

O THOU Preserver of Men! Thou lover of souls, who hast graciously promised, that every one, that asketh, shall receive, that he, that seeketh, shall find, and that to him, that knocketh, it shall be open'd! Be pleas'd to bow down Thine ear, and hear; open thine Eyes, and behold thy petitioning Penitents, now presenting themselves before thee; most humbly beseeching thee to accept our poor services, and most importunately begging thy blessing upon what we are now engag'd in. So unite, and fasten the hearts of all the Members of our Society to each other in love, and sincere affection, that neither Satan nor any of his Agents, may ever be able to divide us, nor ever to cause any difference or disagreement to arise among us; and so open our Understandings, as to make us sensible of the usefulness of the work we are now concern'd in; how well pleasing our endeavours to encrease our LORD'S Kingdom are to thee; and that no time can be so well us'd as that, which is taken up in serving and worshipping thee. Enable us therefore to persist in what we have begun; and to take such pleasure therein as may prevent our being weary in thus well doing. O thou disposer of all hearts, who turnest them which way soever thou wilt! Exert thy Almighty power, in inclining others to be desirous of joyning with us in praising, and magnifying thy great Name; that not only our Numbers here may be encreas'd, but that many in distant places may be stirred up, by our example, to be as zealous as
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they

they ought in so good a Cause; and that an end may be put to that fatal deadness, and lukewarmness in Religious concerns, which has so dreadfully overspread the Christian World. But more especially do we pray, and that most earnestly, that no scorn nor contempt, no reflections nor misrepresentations, no open opposition nor secret undermining insinuations, may discourage the continuance of our thus assembling together; that, whenever any evil attempts are made against us, thy Holy Spirit may not only incline us to take proper steps for our preservation, but furnish us with strength, and resolution equal to our necessities; and that, instead of being uneasy, or dissatisfied upon any occasion, we may resolve to cast all our care upon thee, who carest for us; to look above for help in all our straits, and difficulties; in all our wants, and exigencies; to place our sole trust and Confidence in Thee at all times; and to comfort ourselves with thinking, that we are always under Thy Protection: All which, together with whatever else thine Infinite Wisdom sees necessary, or convenient for us, we beg in the name and for the sake of that ever-living Intercessor, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, our only LORD, and SAVIOUR, Amen.

14 JY 60

F I N I S.



ERRATA.

P. 5. l. 1. add *this* before the word Mercy. P. 5. l. 21. *a* is wanting in the word considerably. P. 8. l. 26. the *Comma* at the end of the word Murder should be a Period. P. 9. l. 11. *e* too much in the word afforded. P. 10. l. 15. *u* wrong plac'd in the word thrust, and l. 21. for *deaf* read *dear*. P. 19. l. 6. for *propose* read *purpose*. P. 24. l. 34. for *arms* read *Alms*. P. 29. l. 19. *s* too much in the word Remarks. P. 30 l. 14. *a* wanting in the word assurance. P. 41. l. 10. *s* too much in the word Epistles. P. 73. l. 34. the *Comma* after the word Condition should be a Period. P. 156. l. 36. *n* is wanting in the first word of it. P. 180. l. 36. *i* wanting in the word Right.



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ERRATA

P. 21. l. 1. add this before the word Mercy. P. 21. l. 21.
" is wanting in the word compass. P. 21. l. 26. the
Comma at the end of the word Master should be a Period. P.
21. l. 27. too much in the word written. P. 21. l. 28. n
wrong place in the word think and l. 29. for deep read clear.
P. 21. l. 30. for wrote read wrote. P. 21. l. 34. for came
read was. P. 21. l. 35. too much in the word Remarks.
P. 21. l. 36. a wanting in the word assistance. R. 41. l. 10.
too much in the word Epistles. P. 73. l. 24. the Comma
at the end of the word Condition should be a Period. P. 73. l. 25.
is wanting in the first word of it. P. 120. l. 35. a wanting
in the word Right.

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